

# Facilitation Techniques in Teaching ESP Online: Postpandemic Solutions for Law-Enforcement Officers Training

Andrii Balendr<sup>1</sup>, Oksana Komarnytska<sup>2</sup>, Oleksandr Didenko<sup>3</sup>, Svitlana Kalaur<sup>4</sup>, Olha Soroka<sup>5</sup>, Andrii Biliavets<sup>6</sup>, & Olha Khamaziuk<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Doctor of Sciences in Pedagogy, Professor, Associate Professor of the Foreign Languages Department, Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine

<sup>2</sup> PhD in Philology, Associate Professor, Associate Professor of the Foreign Languages Department, Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine

<sup>3</sup> Doctor of Sciences in Pedagogy, Professor, Professor of the Department of Psychology, Pedagogy and Socio-Economic Sciences, Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine

<sup>4</sup> Doctor of Sciences in Pedagogy, Professor, Professor of the Department of Social Work and Management of Socio-Cultural Activities, Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, Ternopil, Ukraine

<sup>5</sup> Doctor of Sciences in Pedagogy, Professor, Professor of the Department of Social Work and Management of Socio-Cultural Activities, Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, Ternopil, Ukraine

<sup>6</sup> Lecturer of the Department of Firearms and Special Tactics Training, Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine

<sup>7</sup> Lecturer of the Foreign Languages Department, Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine

Correspondence: Balendr Andrii, Doctor of Sciences in Pedagogy, Professor, Bohdan Khmelnytskyi National Academy of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine.

Received: January 2, 2023

Accepted: February 13, 2023

Online Published: March 17, 2023

doi:10.5430/wjel.v13n5p60

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v13n5p60>

## Abstract

The article considers the effectiveness of teaching English for Specific Purposes online to future border guard officers during their study at the Border Guard Academy. The article considers ways to enhance the border guards' foreign language training, which is partly conducted online due to the quarantine restrictions and ongoing war initiated by Russia. The study covered the experience of organization of facilitation skills development for the teachers and trainers in European Union border guard educational institutions. The authors consider facilitative methods and tools as effective means for teaching future border guards English language online. The facilitative skills acquired by border guard teachers and trainers were tested during ESP Course for border guards at the Ukrainian Border Guard Academy. Analysis of the results of employing facilitation methods and techniques during "Intensive Online English Language Course for Border Guards" proved effectiveness of the conducted online training course and indicates the feasibility of using facilitative methods and techniques within the online training courses for the personnel of the law-enforcement agencies. Comparison of the obtained results (the placement and final assessment) proves the effectiveness of foreign language communicative skills development of the course participants. Therefore, the obtained results testify to the efficiency of utilizing the facilitation techniques by the teachers and trainers of the border guard academy.

**Keywords:** online learning facilitation, English for Specific Purposes, border guards, professional training

## 1. Introduction

The necessity of improving quality of professional training of the personnel of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (SBGSU) is influenced by Ukraine's commitment to comply with the requirements of the Association Agreement with the European Union, the need to train border guards according to the harmonized standards of European law-enforcement agencies and strengthening of cooperation with NATO countries. In order to establish an effective system of preventing and countering threats to national security, professional training of future border guards widely encompasses the possibilities of distance learning, electronic educational resources, "cloud" and virtual reality technologies. The topicality of the research is focused on the modern features of online learning and is corroborated by the current challenges of the border guards' training process organization due to the quarantine restrictions and ongoing war initiated by Russia.

The strategic goal of using possibilities of distance learning (DL) in law-enforcement environment is to provide servicemen with the opportunity to improve their overall professional competence at the border guard units through the use of the departmental Intranet network and telecommunication technologies. With this purpose at the National Academy of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (NASBGSU) has been established the distance learning system consisting of:

Main Coordination Center (Department of Vocational Training of the Personnel Department of the SBGS);

Main DL Center at the National Academy of the Border Guard Service;

DL Centers and Personnel Training Departments;

Pool of DL courses based on the server of the Main Center.

Development of the DL courses and providing necessary consultations are conducted by teachers-tutors of the educational institutions. The methodological training on development of training materials is continuously carried out for this teaching staff. Some courses include contact sessions and exit test of knowledge on the basis of the departmental educational institutions. In order to provide feedback and study the results of the quality of the elaborated teaching content, questionnaires for graduates of the DL courses are processed with the help of the special software ensuring automatic processing of survey results.

In 2021 according to the guiding documents of the SBGS 26373 border guards were trained at 38 refresher courses, including 3867 people in the vocational training system and 22506 servicemen in the refresher courses. In total, during 2012-2021, about 48000 people were trained at the Main Center of Distance Learning. In 2021, 30 courses for officers and 3 courses for junior specialists were conducted. In total, about 7,100 servicemen were involved in distance learning training for border guards.

Altogether, the system of training of Ukrainian Border Guard Service covers basic training in departmental educational institutions, on-the-job training, advanced training courses at National Academy of the SBGS and training centers. Recently, the SBGS began actively cooperating with European organizations involved in the training of border guards: FRONTEX (European Border and Coast Guard Agency). This allows Ukrainian border guards to participate in international educational projects, exchange operational information, organize training courses in accordance with European and international standards, and help optimize the structure of national law enforcement agencies. In cooperation with the FRONTEX Agency, an access to the educational web platform Virtual Aula has been granted to the National Academy of the SBGS. This web platform contains professionally-oriented distance learning courses, electronic textbooks and manuals, simulators for all categories of border guards.

The urgency of the problem is enhanced by the requirements for the professional qualification of teaching staff of the higher educational institutions with specific conditions of education. Such teachers, instructors have to demonstrate professional competence in using information and communication technologies (ICT), specialized electronic tools, electronic textbooks and simulators. Thus, there has emerged a problem of improving the professional competence of teaching staff of the border guard educational institution to work online and, according to the student-centered approach, provide assistance and counseling, which has lately become known in the pedagogical community as learning facilitation.

## 2. Literature Review

The problem of using facilitation techniques for professional training in different spheres was researched by many scientists. In general, facilitation is characterized by a set of skills used to effectively organize the discussion of a complex problem without wasting time and implementation in a short time of all planned actions with maximum involvement of participants. Such facilitative organization of the process of group work, aimed at clarifying and achieving the group's goals, contributes to the effective training of future specialists of different qualifications (Balendr et al., 2019).

A facilitator, who leads the discussion process, conducts successful group communication, helps the group to understand an overall goal and maintains a positive group dynamics to achieve the goal in the discussion process, without defending one of the positions or parties (Hilko, 2014).

So, facilitation in an online environment can be considered as managing student's activity in an online environment (Australian Flexible Learning Framework, 2003). Researchers describe online facilitation as managing communication of students online, also various descriptions and definitions for the term facilitation may be viewed as indistinct, and often overlap with one another to bring about an understanding of online teaching and learning. (Collaborative online learning: issues in online facilitation, 2020). Therefore, the real potential of online learning and teaching lies in the richness of a learning community built through the learning interactions of peer-supported learners (Noakes, 2004). Also, studying facilitation models from the point of view of a university tutor encourages social construction of understanding through online dialogue, to help university tutors to facilitate a dialogic approach to learning online (Swann, 2010).

The findings of some studies provide pedagogical implications on how to design and facilitate authentic e-learning courses for higher education institutions in developing countries (Wong et al., 2020). Also, the roles and competencies of an online facilitator were specifically investigated (Adendorff, 2004). The strategies to ensure successful work of online facilitators were elaborated (Zorfass et al., 1998). The issues related to effective online facilitation within a DL environment at the university revealed the nature of tutor intervention, the presence or absence of peer facilitation and the online tasks (Kaur et al., 2005). The authors came up with three broad issues related to online facilitation that have to be addressed to ensure effectiveness of online instruction. The issues are: a lack of tutor intervention at critical moments; an absence of peer facilitation; and variation in the interpretation and in the assessment of a task.

The use of e-learning tools in the training of future border guards was the subject of study of Komarnytska, Balendr and Blochshynskyi (2019). The authors researched foreign experience in creating e-learning complexes for mobile training of border guards on the basis of

the web platform of border guard agencies of the European Union, focusing on the use of student-centered approach, active implementation of mobile learning (use of mobile gadgets during learning), utilizing virtual, augmented and mixed reality technologies (Balendr et al., 2019; Farion et al., 2022). Although, the issues of online learning facilitation skills development in the system of border guards' distance learning have not been thoroughly studied yet.

Therefore, the research aims to study the effectiveness of teaching English online to cadets of the Border Guard educational institutions using learning facilitation techniques in order to enhance the effectiveness of foreign language training of future border guards within the system of distance learning.

Tasks of the research:

1. Reveal the peculiarities of organization of online facilitation skills development for the border guard trainers in EU;
2. Describe the modern online learning facilitation forms, methods and tools used for teaching future border guards English language;
3. Check effectiveness of the newly acquired facilitative skills during an Intensive Online English Language Course for Border Guards at the National Academy of the SBGS of Ukraine.

### 3. Methods

In order to accomplish the research aim, we have utilized theoretical methods to analyze scientific, methodological sources, curricula, qualification frameworks, operative and service documents of border guard agencies to determine the state of development of the problem of leadership and the leadership qualities in the theory and practice of vocational education; analysis and synthesis – to justify the terminological apparatus of the study; systematization, comparison and synthesis of scientific literature – to determine the peculiarities of online facilitation skills development. We also used empirical methods (surveys, pedagogical observation) to study the state of online facilitation skills of teachers of the National Academy of the SBGS of Ukraine; prognostic method – to reveal positive ideas of the European border guard agencies experience regarding enhancing facilitation skills of teachers, engaged in professional training of border guards and elaborate practical recommendations to improve the professional competence of teachers for effective training delivery in online environment.

### 4. Findings

#### 4.1 Organization of Online Facilitation Skills Development for the Border Guard Trainers in EU

It is widely recognized that in Border Guard organizations, the delivery of specific professionally-oriented training topics is often the task of field experts rather than full-time trainers. Although, the quality of training is greatly influenced by the use of operational expertise, it is necessary to ensure that these experts also have the skills to transfer their operational competence to others. The recently imposed conditions of quarantine restrictions necessitated implementation of additional training for the persons involved in professional courses delivery and introduction of the learners into the variety of learning requirements within Border Guard agencies to compliment and support the delivery of professional training courses.

According to analysis of classification of European border guard agencies, persons involved in border guards' training on all-European level fall under the following broad categories:

field experts with specific operational skills lacking specific competence regarding the design of session content, its delivering and assessing performance of learners;

trainers possessing specific skills to design content of training but having no experience of applying online training delivery methods;

trainers who rely predominantly on the use of PowerPoint or similar software for session content design and deliver training by reading out the content of slides;

trainers who developed their content design and delivery skills from a “teacher centred” rather than a “learner centred” perspective (Frontex Training portfolio, 2017).

Therefore, the EU border guard organisations under the auspices of Frontex agency have come up with the idea to develop a training course to cover these needs. The development of learning across the course was designed to reflect the varied learning requirements of the target learners within Border Guard agencies and to compliment and support the delivery of other professionally-oriented training courses. The developed training course provides those who complete it with an important training and pedagogical framework. It ensures that, on completion, the course graduates are able to contribute to the overall quality of training standards when acting as border guard trainers under conditions of distance learning. The course aims to enable the learners to design and deliver training content and to be able to competently assess if the learners have reached the specified learning outcomes on the completion of a course or section of a course.

The specifics of the course are as follows: it complies with the requirements for the Level 5 of the Sectoral Qualifications Framework for border guarding (2013); encompasses 5 learning credits (115 learner hours, it is 13 weeks long (part-time with online support, with 7 days full-time). The entry requirements are: an applicant should be a member of EU border guard agency; English Language level – B2 (according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment); expertise in the specific content to be designed and delivered.

Given this range of existing competence and recognising that many potential learners have engaged in non-formal and informal learning

opportunities, the course adopts a modular approach (3 modules altogether) in order to provide the necessary knowledge, skills and competences required by each learner, providing a flexible learning path that makes best use of recognition of prior learning and best value for training and human resources.

The blended learning approach is used to model a broad range of design and delivery methods to the learners. The first module of the course is delivered through a virtual learning environment, whilst modules 2 and 3 have face-to-face contact components along with independent learning for knowledge acquisition and skills development and practice. Each module has an online assessment component, as moving forward all trainings will utilise Virtual Aula web-platform for at least part of each course. The modules with contact phases of learning adopt practical assessments related to session design and delivery such that both the method and feedback can be directly applied in the border guard operational context. During live tutorial sessions, the learners are introduced to the key features a trainer should be able to operate in the Virtual Learning Environment version of Moodle. They have the chance to test these functions simultaneously with the trainer facilitating the session. These features can be: setting up an assignment; set up a marking rubric associated to an assignment; managing and downloading learners' submissions; grading submissions; managing and exporting grades.

Before beginning of the online training course, the learners receive a training package with documents, multimedia resources and tasks to refresh or familiarize with learner-centred approach and the role of trainers, and PowerPoint as a tool for trainers. Participants are expected to actively take part in the discussion forum set up in the Virtual Aula web-platform. Questions related to the readings are posed by tutors, who are moderating and encouraging debate. Active participation in the discussion forums is mandatory and an essential part of the learning process. During the contact learning phase, the learners are developing skills in session design by attending lectures, engaging in practical exercises and group work, interacting with each other and providing constructive feedback on their peers' assignments. The learning activities during this phase are facilitated through the use of Virtual Learning Environment which affords the learners the opportunity to start interacting and becoming familiar with Moodle both as participants and trainers. The progression of learning is ensured by the use of learning tools and assessment criteria, which are authentic to session design, aligned to the learning outcomes and by providing support to the learners throughout the whole module.

On completion of the study, the learners are able to:

- selectively apply a range of learning methods, tools, techniques and communication skills to deliver training activities online;
- assess learner performance, including peer review, ensuring achievement of learning outcomes and provision of constructive feedback;
- continuously evaluate training quality online in terms of content and delivery and identify areas for improvement.

The practical forms and methods for the facilitating skills formation within border guards' distance learning system are focused on skills development and facilitating "learning by doing", promoting a learner-centred approach. Group work and peer review are essential elements of the learning strategy, designed to ensure active participation of the learners and a collaborative approach to session planning.

#### *4.2 Online Learning Facilitation Forms, Methods and Tools Used for Teaching Future Border Guards English Language*

The facilitation technologies utilized by border guard trainers to implement the principles of facilitation are well-known: "World Cafe", "Open Space", "Analysis of the field of forces of Kurt Levin", "At the same time next year", "Search for the future", "Paradigm of positive changes", "Brainstorming", "Dynamic facilitation" and others. These technologies increase the efficiency of the group decision-making process (situation analysis; identifying options, alternatives; choosing the best option), create, maintain a positive group climate (increase the level of involvement in the discussion process; stimulate initiative; encourage personal responsibility for the process and result), provide exchange of experience between participants, promote their personal development.

Also there have been recently introduced some innovative forms and methods into the border guards' learning facilitation process, such as: "Work Out", "Polarization of opinions", "Moderation cards", "Continuum", "Aquarium". So, "Work Out" method was designed to help interacting in a problematic team, when participants have low level of trust and provide open discussions under conditions of the chain of command. The method allows to quickly make a breakthrough, create a culture of an advanced rapidly changing border guard service. The method called "Opinions polarization", used when it is necessary to consider two scenarios for the development of the situation: optimistic and pessimistic. The facilitator divides the group into two camps - "optimists" and "skeptics". "Optimists" talk about positive aspects (benefits, acquisitions), "skeptics" – about negative ones (risks, consequences). Helps to reveal hidden problems and dangers. "Moderation cards" – the method used to find a solution with a large number of factors and tasks, many of which are hidden. The facilitator asks the question or sets a problem. Participants write their answer on cards (Goggle forms), which are then grouped by meaning. The best solution to the problem is selected from several groups and is discussed by all (Martynova, 2011).

"Continuum" – this tool helps the group communicate on polarized issues. One side of the room is referred to as the "for" side, the other – "against". Depending on their views, their level of emotions and attitude to a particular issue, participants choose their point according to the specified conditional line. Then participants with different views are asked to share them. "Aquarium" – when using this learning activity, the facilitator conducts a post-briefing for border guard shift on a recent situation. At the necessary moments (learning moments), the facilitator stops the briefing in order to deal with the group with the experience or practice of resolving certain problematic issues. Facilitators of such groups can be experts in a certain field of knowledge who are able to give a constructive generalization of the results of work. The purpose of the role play is to practice skills and work out alternative ways of acting in different situations (Tools of Dialogue

in Making Effective Decisions at the Community Level, 2019).

A teacher-facilitator has to possess certain qualities, such as: "truth", "openness", "stimulation", "unconditional positive acceptance", "trust", "empathic understanding", as well as the vision of the student's behavior, his various reactions. The author recommended the following *methods* of facilitation (Rogers, 1971):

the use of diverse learning resources and the creation of special conditions that facilitate students' use and provide them with psychological and physical accessibility;

formation of various feedbacks between teacher and students in the learning process;

creation of groups of free communication to increase the level of psychological culture of interpersonal communication and actualization of personal guidelines.

So, the facilitators task and duties in the student-centered environment are to create not only instructive, but partnership-type of relations with students (Soroka et al., 2019). The facilitator have to continuously make it clear that facilitator and students work together, also tutors mustn't set themselves up as experts in a subject, but instead have to guide students through the process. That includes asking to share own sources and references that help to elaborate further on the topics. The tutors also are highlighting the equality of rights and subject-subject approach, and presenting it in a non-obtrusive and "casual" manner, creating an atmosphere of trust and non-discrimination. The assessment of online sessions during border guards training envisions each assessment as a learning opportunity for both the module outcomes and the learning outcome related to the skill of conducting fair assessments, using agreed marking rubrics and providing constructive feedback. Thus, peer assessment is a key component of providing effective online assessment.

Another important part of conducting online courses is using online boards to provide effective facilitation. There are many of them nowadays: Inout, Lino, Miro, Mural, Stormz, Padlet etc. They provide the ability to replicate the classroom activity where you jot ideas on post-its and then can cluster them and re-arrange them under themes for example. For the purposes of the border guards foreign languages training the most suitable was, first of all, Padlet, which is a visual virtual noticeboard that allows learners to share text, links, pictures and video, leave feedback and ratings, and rearrange and link shared items. *Miro* wins on visual appearance and the menu also works more intuitively. The board looks more tranquil due to the color palette used. *Mural*'s menu structure is simpler with fewer buttons. This is nice for participants, because it makes it easier to grasp. *Mural* is easier to organize sticky notes, while *Miro* has a very handy bulk function which allows you to add several sticky notes to a board at once (Van Der Storm, 2020).

### 4.3 Study of the Experimental Course Effectiveness

The effectiveness of using facilitation techniques by the teachers of English language was verified during the approbation of the "Intensive Online English Language Course for Border Guards", which lasted from September to December 2021. During this period, 60 border guard officers, who serve at the bodies of border protection of Ukraine, following the pre-defined selection procedure were chosen for participating in this online training course.

During the whole course of study the trainers of the experimental course were actively utilizing various methods of facilitation, which helped participants to interact in different ways: in groups (microgroups), in teams members of which had a common task, in *Breakout Rooms*, where participants could conduct conversations or perform a microgroup task, or in the process of virtual exchange of opinions by the whole study group. The forms and methods used to facilitate foreign language competence formation of the border guards' online learning course were based on the principles of "learning by doing", and were focusing on a student-centred approach. Collaborative group work and peer review exercise were used to ensure active participation of the students and a common approach of the trainers to learning process.

At the beginning of experiment, the placement test of the officers' English language knowledge was carried out, and at the end of study, the final evaluation was performed, and the results were compared. According to the received results of the placement test, which was carried out in in September, 2021, the following grades were received: 16 (27%) participants had a high level of foreign communication skills (5A); 27 (45%) showed a middle level (4B/4C); 17 (28%) – a low level (3D).

The results of the final examination held in December 2021 demonstrated that the foreign language competence of the participants changed: 25 (42%) of participants demonstrated a high level of English communication skills and received 5A increasing the total of high level by 10%; 30 (50%) of the participants received 4B/4C (middle level) showing the increase of 5%; and the quantity of low level marks decreased by 15% as only 8 (13%) of participants got 3D (Table 1).

Table 1. Border guards' foreign language competence formation before and after the online course "Intensive Online English Language Course for Border Guards", n=60

Grades	At the beginning of experiment		At the end of experiment	
	Persons	%	Persons	%
High level (5A)	16	27	22	37
Middle level (4B/4C)	27	45	30	50
Low level (3D)	17	28	8	13

Comparison of the obtained results (of the placement and final assessment) proved that the foreign language communicative skills of the participants of the course were formed more effectively, which testifies about the efficiency of the facilitation skills development of the trainers of the Border Guard Academy. According to the results of the distance course, the average score of the participants increased from

3.98 to 4.23 points. In order to interpret results, the following formula was used:

$$\sum(x_1 \times f_1) + (x_2 \times f_2) + (x_3 \times f_3) / n = \sum / n = \text{G.P.A.}$$

where  $x_1, x_2, x_3$  – grades (5A, 4B/4C, 3D);

$f_1, f_2, f_3$  – number of border guards who obtained some grade;

$n$  – total number of border guards;

G.P.A. – grade point average.

$$\sum(5A \times 16) + (4B/4C \times 27) + (3D \times 17) / 60 = (80 + 108 + 51) / 60 = 239 / 60 = 3,98$$

(placement test results).

$$\sum(5A \times 22) + (4B/4C \times 30) + (3D \times 8) / 60 = (110 + 120 + 24) / 60 = 254 / 60 = 4,23$$

(final test results).

This proves the effectiveness of active using the facilitation techniques while conducting online training course “Intensive Online English Language Course for Border Guards”. Questioning of the graduates of the course showed that they became more motivated to enhance their foreign language competence.

## 5. Discussion

Taking the above mentioned into account we can conclude that the problem of developing facilitation skills for border guard trainers is relevant in the modern conditions of quarantine restrictions and needs further study. Nowadays online facilitation is an effective teaching technology and can be implemented during different training courses at the border guard educational institutions. The trainer-facilitator should be able to organize the learning process, involve participants and manage the group dynamics, as well as to provide effective group communication of the participating border guards. The facilitator has to make the communication process convenient and easy for all participants, help the group to understand the learning outcomes and maintain a positive atmosphere to achieve the goal in the process of discussion, without adhering to any of the parties (Soroka et al., 2020).

Speaking about what forms and methods of teaching can be applied to facilitate online learning of border guards, we agree with Mykra’s “Learner-centered Teaching Methods“ (Mycra, 2014), it’s although important to keep in mind the differences in motivational sphere of adults, who want to use the obtained knowledge, skills and competencies in their professional sphere immediately, without any delay, because they want to be competitive in solving professional issues. Adult border guards unlike schoolchildren already know why they need this knowledge and where they’ll be applying it. And so, in the andragogic system of teaching the basic methods should be those that use activity-based experience (discussions, case-study, simulations, business games), or the new example – the Border Guard Board Game designed by Frontex Agency. Also, school-like, imperative teaching paradigm is not effective enough for the personnel of the SBGS, who can even have more practical experience than their teachers, as they may come directly from the operational sphere. So, an active using of the feedback both from the graduates and from their chiefs at the border is necessary, to make timely amendments to the curricula. Thus, e-learning and distance learning opens greater perspectives in this case, when the role of a tutor is to be viewed more as a facilitator, who can encourage peer-learning. Speaking about modern Border Guard training and education, it’s worth mentioning that it’s based on the Sectoral Qualification Framework for border guarding (2013) and provisions of Bologna and Copenhagen processes, which are aligned with the European Qualification Framework, which put forward the concept of Life-Long Learning. Thus, as border guard population is represented by adults, we have to consider using principles of andragogy.

## 6. Conclusion

Generalization and analysis of the results of employing facilitation methods and techniques during “Intensive Online English Language Course for Border Guards” proved the effectiveness of the conducted training course and indicates the feasibility of using facilitative methods and techniques within the online training courses for the personnel of the border guard agencies. This is confirmed by the higher results demonstrated by the cadets at their final examination, specifically: 25 (42%) of the participants demonstrated a high level of English communication skills and received 5A, having increased the total of high level by 10%; 30 (50%) of the participants received 4B/4C (middle level) showing the increase of 5%; and the quantity of low level marks decreased by 15% as only 8 (13%) of participants got 3D. Comparison of the obtained results (the placement and final assessment) proves that the foreign language communicative skills of the participants of the course were formed effectively. According to the results of the distance course, the average score of the participants increased from 3.98 to 4.23 points. Therefore, the results testify about the efficiency of the facilitation skills development of the trainers of the Border Guard Academy.

The research does not cover all the aspects of the problem. Such issues as improving the quality of training of future border guards by developing and using modern information and communication technologies, including virtual reality tools to form and develop professional skills to perform professional duties under various conditions of operational and service activity of the border protection agencies need further attention.

## References

Adendorff, D. (2004). *An investigation into the roles and competencies of an online facilitator*. PhD thesis, University of Pretoria, 394.

- Retrieved from <https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/27469/Complete.pdf?sequence=9&isAllowed=y>
- Australian Flexible Learning Framework for the National Vocational Education and Training System 2000-2004: Implementation Plan. (2003). FLAG Secretariat, Melbourne, Victoria. 20. Retrieved from <https://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv%3A5683>
- Balendr, A., Komarnytska, O., & Bloshchynskiy, I. (2019). Ukrainian border guards interoperability assessment in the framework of common European border guard standards implementation. *Advanced Education*, 35-43. <https://doi.org/10.20535/2410-8286.128196>
- Balendr, A., Korolov, V., Adamchuk, O., Iakymchuk, A., Sinkevych, S., & Bloshchynskiy, I. (2019). Border guards' distance learning development in the European Union countries. *Information technologies and learning tools*, 71(3), 305-319. <https://doi.org/10.33407/itlt.v71i3.2749>
- Collaborative Online Learning: Issues in Online Facilitation. (2020). Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265882001\\_Collaborative\\_Online\\_Learning\\_Issues\\_in\\_Online\\_Facilitation](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265882001_Collaborative_Online_Learning_Issues_in_Online_Facilitation)
- Farion, O., Balendr, A., Androshchuk, O., Mostovyi, A., & Grinchenko, V. (2022). Methods of Extraction and Analysis of Intelligence to Combat Threats of Organized Crime at the Border. *Journal of Human, Earth, and Future*, 3(3), 345-360. <https://doi.org/10.28991/HEF-2022-03-03-07>
- Frontex Training portfolio. (2017). *European Border and Coast Guard Agency*. Warsaw, Poland. Retrieved from [https://prd.frontex.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017\\_training\\_portfolio.pdf](https://prd.frontex.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017_training_portfolio.pdf)
- Hilko, S. (2014). Facilitative approach to the training of future psychologists. Psychological and pedagogical support of modernization of postgraduate pedagogical education in the conditions of changes: *All-Ukrainian. scientific-practical internet conference*. University of Education Management, Kyiv. Retrieved from <http://umo.edu.ua/Sekciya3.pdf>
- Kaur, H., & Kaur, K. (2005). Collaborative Online Learning: Issues in Online Facilitation. In *ICDE International Conference*, November, 19 - 23, New Delhi, India. Retrieved from <http://library.oum.edu.my/repository/52/>
- Komarnytska, O. I., Balendr, A. V., & Bloshchynskiy, I. H. (2019). ESP Teaching Strategies Of Ukrainian Border Guards Training On The Experience Of European Union Countries. *Journal of Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes*, 455-465. <https://doi.org/10.22190/JTESAP1803455K>
- Martynova, A. (2011). Facilitation as an organizational technology development and change. *Organizational Psychology*, 1(2), 53-91. Retrieved from [http://ecsocman.hse.ru/data/2011/12/29/1270394410/OrgPsy\\_2011-2\\_Martynova\\_53-91.pdf](http://ecsocman.hse.ru/data/2011/12/29/1270394410/OrgPsy_2011-2_Martynova_53-91.pdf)
- Mykra, T. (2014). Learner-centered Teaching Methods – A Toolkit for Secondary Education Teachers. *Indiana University Bloomington*, 58. Retrieved from [https://tarjamykra.weebly.com/uploads/2/2/5/9/22597646/teaching\\_methods\\_mykr%C3%A4\\_012316.pdf](https://tarjamykra.weebly.com/uploads/2/2/5/9/22597646/teaching_methods_mykr%C3%A4_012316.pdf)
- Noakes, N. (2004). Developing online facilitators. *Developing Learning Environments: Creativity, Motivation and Collaboration in Higher Education*, 1, 291. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/293218051\\_Developing\\_online\\_facilitators](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/293218051_Developing_online_facilitators)
- Rogers, C. (1971). Describes His Way of Facilitating Encounter Groups. *The American Journal of Nursing*, 71(2), 275-279. <https://doi.org/10.1097/0000446-197102000-00021>
- Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Border Guarding. FRONTEX. Warsaw: Rondo ONZ 1. 2013, Vol. 1. 173.
- Soroka, O., Kalaur, S., & Balendr, A. (2019). Diagnostics of leadership qualities of specialists of "man-man" type of professions in military and civil higher education institutions: Psychological and pedagogical approach. *Revista Romaneasca pentru Educatie Multidimensionala*, 11(4S1), 264-277. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/189>
- Soroka, O., Kalaur, S., & Balendr, A. (2020). Monitoring of Corporate Culture Formation of Specialists of Social Institutions. *Postmodern Openings/Deschideri Postmoderne*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.18662/po/11.1sup1/131>
- Swann, J. (2010). dialogic approach to online facilitation. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 26(1). <https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.1102>
- Tools of Dialogue in Making Effective Decisions at the Community Level (2019). *OSCE Training materials*. Retrieved from <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/2/9/452800.pdf>
- Van Der Storm, E. (2020). *Miro vs Mural. Which online collaborative platform to choose*. Retrieved from <https://stormpunt.nl/en/2020/03/17/miro-vs-mural/>
- Wong, A., & Yuen, K. K. F. (2020). Authentic e-Learning. *Perspectives from Online Facilitators in a Developing Country*. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-40271-6\\_9](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-40271-6_9)
- Zorfass, J., Remz, A., Gold, J., Ethier, D., & Corley, P. (1998). *Strategies to ensure that online facilitators are successful*. Education Development Center Inc., 28. Retrieved from <https://www2.edc.org/NCIP/facilitation.pdf>

### Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).