POLICE-ONLINE – SUCCESSFUL PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to generalize our German colleagues' experience on creating an educational platform for police officers.

The introduction of educational module POLICE-ONLINE "integrated educational management system" in the federal Land Reinland – Phalz is being completed. Starting from the second half of 2009, all refreshing courses are organized according to this system. It has become the motivating factor for writing this article.

At first, the project POLICE-ONLINE itself is introduced. Then, the current state of permanently growing national cooperation and its spreading all over Europe is presented.

The article considers the issues of "integrated educational management system" functioning. POLICE-ONLINE at present features a number of modules, which according to their contents and functions, consider requirements to police officers' training.

The main idea of the article is the discussion around general and specific opportunities of ELearning and blended learning, as well as their advantages and possible risks. At the end of the article the conclusion is made about knowledge and skills obtained due to the project. It should be mentioned, that POLICE-ONLINE project was awarded with «European ELearning - Award». In the category "ELearning for professional purposes - the highest efficiency" the top-notch policemen were identified. In their eulogy the judges emphasized the efficiency of the innovational project POLICE-ONLINE especially for work with staff and for organizational system development.

Key words: E-Learning, blended learning, education, educational management

1. INTRODUCTION

The Federal Republic of Germany is the federal state. Homeland security issues are within the competence of federal Lands. The police forces of federal Lands cooperate with each other, although they work in parallel. The police activities are influenced both by alterations in federal laws and their practical application. Existing of such alterations means that associate professors in higher educational institutions, teachers in special educational institutions are reconsidering their teaching concepts, renewing their teaching programs, designing new studying forms, and transfer their knowledge at different workshops. As a rule, such events are conducted simultaneously in different cities: in Hamburg, Dusseldorf, Erfurt, Mainz and Munich. However, not only above mentioned cities, but also Baden-Baden, Württemberg, Hessen, Reinland – Phalz, Berlin, Saarland, Nordrein – Westfalen have united under the auspices of the integrated project POLICE-ONLINE. Together, they are joining their endeavors to introduce a modern and efficient educational system.

1.1. What is POLICE-ONLINE project?

In 1998 POLICE-ONLINE project was launched in PPP form (Public-Private-Partnership) as a strategic method based on cooperation between the federal Land Baden – Württemberg and German Telekom. Within this cooperation POLICE-ONLINE project has been developed as a single successful project. While earlier the main stress was exclusively made on an educational management sector, today we are considering four major functions:

1. Integrated educational and training management
2. Single intranet – decision
3. Internet and electronic applications
4. Documentary and procedural management

As before, educational management remains the coacher for the POLICE-ONLINE project. At present, five federal lands are participating in the project for the further development of educational management, where the police partners are working together with their partners from economics. Other federal Lands are indicating their wish to participate in this project.

1.2. Cooperaion

POLICE-ONLINE project can be considered as a national project on cooperation. Joint work saves resources, brings together forces and increases productivity. As a result, all participants win.

Technology, experience, methods, contents - all this is shared and disposed. Cooperative mutual influence results in sufficient expenses minimizing and implementation improving. Thanks to this success, the POLICE-ONLINE project is now reaching the new dimension in cooperation: "POLICE-ONLINE is striding across Europe".

To resist efficiently international and transnational crime, the cooperation between several central and eastern European countries has been developed under the leadership of Central – European Police Academy (MEPA).

It turned out that in such cooperation modern and efficient communication between participants is possible only through the development of the united multifunctional intranet – platform. On the base of the electronic platform the POLICE-ONLINE project was created.

Within one project supported by the European Union, so – called MEPA – portal was designed.

Together with informational and other communicational opportunities this portal features specially designed applications for ELearning. These educational electronic features contribute in knowledge transfer for thousands of policemen from eight countries – members of the project.

2 . **POLICE-ONLINE - integrated educational management system.**

This system mainly consists of 2 key areas:

- Educational management, directed at administration tasks;
- Training management, directed at knowledge transfer and its application.

In the recent past cooperation dealt very intensively with the issue how to integrate police firearms training into POLICE-ONLINE in order to correspond the planning, conducting and controlling firearms training requirements based on PDV 211.

It turned out quickly that in different federal Lands similar requirements prevail. It fit into a single design of a special concept, which had to be designed and completed by the autumn, 2009. After the full implementation in Reinland – Phalz, about 20000 firearms trainings were organized annually and the results were documented respectively. This example clarifies the possibilities of synergy achieved, as well as labor division and cost reduction

2.1 Educational management

There is a component in educational management, which basic direction is planning and giving educational opportunities, as well as managing participants. What at first seems simple, turns out to be underestimated complexity:

- Land police schools and other educational institutions offer 100 training courses annually which include dozens of thousands places to attend.
- dates and venues of workshops can, as a rule, be used by all employees of a corresponding organization.
- when a training offer is announced almost all federal Land police stations process professionally participants' wishes. Herewith, individual educational needs are taken into account, target groups levels are aligned, and functionality of the service is provided, if necessary.
- such an approach provides the further growth, if systemic using of training programs achieved through cooperation can also be applied to a bachelor degree.

Key technological processes are supported by a POLICE-ONLINE portal. Such application considers real requirements to policemen which stemmed from long – term improving of the police activities.

It is believed that POLICE-ONLINE covers not only the basic tasks range of the central police educational institution, but also enables all police agencies to plan their own events, inner refreshing courses, as well as display and manage data.

Due to convenient search and evaluation tools, the police organization has the system corresponding to strategic and operational police tasks.

Particular application

Step 1:

All police officers can enroll without an additional registration from any computer, which is online and via police intranet – access for this educational portal.

All important educational opportunities are immediately updated and personalized. You can see at once the state in which your application form is.

You can also access current educational activities via a personal page, whether we are talking about an electronic educational application or professional development in the form of personal involvement.

All police officers can access their pages any time on the educational portal.

Step 2:

The choice of the event

If there is a personal need for a refreshing course, a police officer chooses workshops from the list - timing, venues and job profiles, and informs about their desire to improve their skills online.

Before it, policemen had an opportunity to improve their skills after talking with a boss and according to a schedule.

Initially, registration is processed by an authorized person in charge, which means checking and evaluating. In affirmative case participation of a police officer is registered. So, the educational institution receives applications online, taking into account a current situation. At the same time, other administration processes are performed via the system. The access is fulfilled freely via the personal page in electronic educational offers but through the person in charge of a service instance.

Team registration

If a current and mandatory refreshing course for big target groups should be organized, i.e. due to law alterations, potential participants can be registered and places for them can be booked online via authorized people in charge. There are convenient options for this in order to filter chosen groups according to a particular service instance, and refer them to specific tasks. Thus, the chosen police officers will be notified by e-mail after enrolling for certain refreshing courses and be able to follow the link and see their application on their personal page.

Step 3: Completion of educational activities

After taking part in educational activities, the system confirms participating in it. After that, process becomes a personal educational file. If educational activities were offered within a full - time event, an implementer provides a certificate of participation, which is the part of a formal personal file. At the same time, the system confirms actual participation in educational activities. This step is necessary because timely refusals to participate or replacements due to a participant illness or certain directives should be taken into account.

2.2 Educational management – ELearning and blended learning

The profession of a policeman has a specific feature to be constantly under public scrutiny. That is why, all policemen should constantly improve their skills. For this reason for the police current and comprehensive information, basic knowledge and directives are absolutely obligatory. The police will permanently deal with the necessity to improve their skills, which will be implemented on time.   Innovative developments in modern information and communication technologies, as well as the ever-present extremist threats are the examples of it.

Traditional educational methods are limited by their opportunities regarding the required time of implementation or based on duration or quality assurance the experience of multipliers should be used.

Considering constant narrowing of personal and financial resources and ever-growing requirements to police officers, they must be trained in the context of innovations.

Electronic and blended learning integrated into educational management will help the police achieve their goals.

ELearning and blended learning

Both these concepts are widely used. But what do they mean? What do they have in common and in what way are they different? What will be the fundamental strength of these two types of training?

To achieve common understanding let us give brief description of both phenomena:

ELearning refers to all forms of learning, in which electronic means for presentations and promotion of learning material and / or to maintain the communication between people are used. We can call it also online learning, tele learning, computer based learning, multimedia learning, open and distance learning, computer - controlled learning and so on.

Blended learning

The concept of blended learning refers to such a form of learning which means connecting traditional classroom activities with contemporary forms of ELearning. The concept links efficiency and flexibility of ELearning forms with social aspects of face-to-face communication and practical training. In this form of learning a variety of teaching methods, electronic media and theoretical foundations of a learning process are combined.

OUR EXPERIENCE

Now we would like to tell you about our experience in introduction of blended learning at our university. Creating POLICE – ONLINE project using ELearning and blended learning by our German colleagues inspired us for launching blended learning experiment at the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University.

In September, 2015 the Resource Center of Foreign Languages of IKBFU where we work with my colleagues initiated introduction of blended learning at our university. Taking as a basis our German colleagues' experience, we decided to start our experiment at the Law Faculty, which is a traditional staff provider for the Kaliningrad police. Later, 6 more faculties joined the experiment.

The training was conducted for our lecturers, Touchstone and Viewpoint Textbooks and online Workbooks by Cambridge University Press were bought and the project was launched.

All home assignment was made online during the time when the certain unit was learnt. That is, the teacher controlled students' independent work, since she herself opened the unit home task for a defined period of time and then closed it. The program is such that the lecturer was able to watch what was done and when, how many times a student fulfilled the home assignment and how much time it took for them. Online Workbook also included some supplementary materials which students could use. Furthermore, a lecturer was able to leave important information on the forum, make announcements, and write their blogs and comments, etc. Using online Workbook could spare time at the lessons because the lecturer was able to do all these from their home PC.

In general, it was challenging and unusual experience both for students and lecturers of our Resource Centre. Such projects had already been conducted at some higher educational institutions of Russia but for us it has become really pioneering.

After completion of the experiment the survey was conducted to receive feedback from lecturers and students. Frankly speaking, feedback proved to be rather controversial. Some of our colleagues complained that the project was very time – consuming for them as they had to check home assignment late at night. For others it was merely unusual since the home task is traditionally checked during the lesson.

Here is the example of teacher's responses to the questionnaire on Blended Learning (BL) experiment

1) Was it difficult to you as a teacher to learn to use the Cambridgelms.org?	Not really as I had a very intelligent colleague who explained me how to use it
2) How long did it take you as a teacher to learn to use the Cambridgelms.org?	About two weeks
3) What level of English do your students have?	A2-B1
4) How many English lessons per week do your students have?	two
5) How can your students' motivation for language learning be described?	They write that they want to know English but now they do not have time and desire to learn it, either they want to acquire skills and get high marks
6) What are advantageous features of the experiment on	It helps organize the time, work to deadline

Blended Learning for learners?	
7) What are advantageous features of the experiment on Blended Learning for teachers?	It saves time at the lesson
8) How does the Touchstone 3 motivate students?	Well, it's difficult to say but the Touchstone is very well structured and it contains contemporary English (American) English
9) What aspect of English does the Touchstone 3 train most?	I think, Speaking
10) What are the drawbacks of the Touchstone 3?	In my opinion, it's not a drawback but it's based on the American English which is a bit difficult to accept as we were taught and we've taught our students British English, that is why such expressions as "hafta", "wanna", etc. made me feel nervous.
11) What problems did you have during the experiment?	We all had some problems with the software
12) How can you comment on the language content of the Touchstone 3?	It's good but as I have already said, American English is the thing I'm personally not used to.
13) How can you comment on the methodology of the Touchstone 3?	I really like it. The student's book and the teacher's book are well structured and written clearly
14) Have you used any supplementary materials or any additional techniques in teaching your Touchstone group? What? What for?	no
15) What is your general impression of the Blended Learning experiment using the Touchstone 3?	It's just the first step we should continue
16) What conditions must be met for the successful implementation of Blended Learning to non-linguistic students?	The first and the most important thing is motivation
17) Any additional comments	no

As for students, they evaluated the experiment in a different way. Here is a questionnaire, which a group of 13 students filled after completion of the course.

1. What is positive about the experiment?
1. I think that everything is positive. Thanks to this experiment, I became better in English. 2. It saves the time of writing 3. I spend more time on studying English. It helps me to improve it. You improve the knowledge of English. You learn new things. 4. The positive is that this test has different aspects: speaking, listening, writing, reading, that help to understand the topic. Plus it is that it is possible to work in the online -workbook when you're comfortable, of course, unable to keep the deadline. Dates are also an advantage, because you can go back to unfinished tasks until the unit closed. 5. Looking at it as a kind of experience, I can say that it is good. I like the online workbook because it can be practiced at any convenient time for me. 6. The positive thing about the experiment it is different various of learning English: reading, listening, grammar etc. 7. The positive side is that there is an opportunity to work in the online -notebook which is new for Russian students. Moreover, there is a deadline of the unit, so you can regularly practice language, returning to them throughout the module, as well as improve your time management. 8. I think it was a great idea. Now I can study my English lessons without any papers. 9. Positive in experiment is improving their English language skills. Through experiment I could learn something new and update old knowledge Opportunity of doing homework online and study with the help of the Internet 10. I think that everything is positive about that. You can make homework on your laptop, using keyboard (I also think, it's wonderful experience for our future). For me - it is very convenient. 11. All is positive in this experiment.
2. What is negative about the experiment?
1. There are frequent problems with writing the correct answer. The site does not always work properly. Sometimes the results are not saved. 2. It is not always the results are stored, which is very annoying. Sometimes a website is simply not open. 3. Only work of the experiment is negative. In all the rest it is good/ 4. Sometimes I forget about test`s deadline 5. The negative point is only that there is a large flow of knowledge. Sometimes you do not have time to keep up with him. 6. For me negative feature is that after the end time of doing the test I can no longer open it.

7. The negative thing about the experiment it is too long time for exercises and don't interesting themes
8. Sometimes the system gives an error as the task is done, the program does not count points.
9. There are a couple of technical issues; they seriously inhibit the educational process. Negative in experiment - not enough time for this job.
10. The experiment requires a lot of free time
11. A large amount of tasks
12. In my opinion - it's all about program little problems. There was, and there is, a little "numbers" of bugs, but it I believe it will pass.
13. Nothing is negative.

3. Are four lessons per week enough for the success of the experiment?

1. Absolutely yes. This is enough for successful language learning provided hours is enough for English classes.
2. Yes. It's enough for the success of the experiment.
   Of course. You manage to repeat and fix material.
3. Yes. The system often is faltering, for solving problems no points. Even when you enter the correct answer, it cannot be counted because of the extra space. It is not convenient, it is easy to overlook.
4. Yes, four classes per week is enough to improve your level of English.
5. Enough
6. In general, four classes to study topics for me are enough. But some topics I'd like to study longer.
7. Four lessons per week is pretty enough. Now I don't need looking for additional sources to my English progress.
8. Of course! These lessons are enough for us.
9. Yes, that's enough
10. Enough
11. Yes, I think that it is enough
12. Per week is too much for my specialty, cos we have a lot of homework. But if I were study English in profile subject - I think it's quite enough.
13. Four classes a week is definitely enough.

4. How can you describe your motivation for studying English?

1. I want to speak English fluently in other countries.
2. My motivation is a prestigious job. English language is needed in any work that I want to do.
3. Learning the language will help me in the future when applying for a job.
4. As for me reading and speaking helps me to train.
   I understand that in the modern world you need to know a foreign language. To me he is not given easily, but I try.
5. My motivation - it's my future. Knowing that more useful to me English - I would like to study it
6. When I talk with someone in English abroad and cannot express their thoughts, I understand that it is necessary to know a foreign language.
   I want to go abroad and talk, learn, understand everything that would be around me.
7. Firstly, I like English. Secondly, I just realize that there are no ways without a foreign language. English language is the world language.
8. I like it, I think English is one of the most thorough language. And it is very important to know it.
9. Knowledge of English language is very important, especially when you travel to other countries. My motivation for studying English is possibility to talk with foreigners.
10. English is an international language that's why English opens many opportunities in the future life and career
11. I think it helps to train writing
    A wish to know foreign language and to be able to chat in it will help me in future
12. I think I just like it. And it is very important in my opinion to know at least three languages for the Man of Our Century.
13. I want to pass all my exams well and English too.

5. What aspects of English (speaking, listening, writing, reading) does the experiment help to train?

1. Almost all of them, listening, writing, reading.
2. All of them, except speaking.
3. All aspects are important
4. As for me reading and speaking helps me to train.
5. Speaking. As it turns out, my classmates love to chat in English.
6. Speaking and listening most to help me learn the language.
7. Writing.
8. Speaking is a great thing. Hot Topics in English - and your classmate is telling about the benefits and of GMO and dangers of plastic surgery.
9. I think all of them are important. Without any of them one is not able to assemble the knowledge about language.
10. I think is speaking and reading, because it is most useful in life.

11. It helps to train writing and reading.
12. I think all of them are quite important. Without gramma you will be fool while trying to speak with someone. I like speaking very much, and listening of course. It is beautiful to notice how different people talk in just one language.
13. I think it is reading.

6. What aspects of English doesn't the experiment help to train?

1. Speaking, because at home you cannot speak English.
2. Experiment doesn't help to train speaking.
3. It is rather reading. It seems, listening to something you remember, but you don't understand why.
4. Not one.
5. Writing less than the rest helps learn English.
6. Listening.
7. Writing
8. I don't even know actually. A language expert may answer to this. I can't catch it.
9. I don`t understand the question.
10. Speaking, because in the experiment had no one to talk.
11. It doesn`t help to train speaking
12. I don`t know actually. I don't like to criticize this system course I see future in that kind of stuff.
13. All of them help.

7. Are the topics in the Student's Book interesting according to your point of view?

1. As for me, I am interested in these topics in the Student's Book.
2. I think all category of learning English in this book are important.
3. Unfortunately, some of them seem to me not so interesting.
4. Yes. Even something you learns new.
5. The most ordinary topics: studying, food, work. All this applies to each of us, so, yes, it's interesting.
6. Topics in the book are quite interesting.
7. No.
8. Topics are generally ordinary: food, health, beauty. However, we must recognize that any topic will find an echo in the breakaway Russian soul.
9. I can't say that the topics are interesting. But they shouldn't, they are about common life, common situations.
10. Yes, I think it is a very interesting topic, which give useful information.
11. I was interested in themes like "Wonders of the world" and "Relationships"
12. It isn't just interesting. It's good for your possible future connection with other people. For example, you met a man. He's just like prince without the horse but with the castle. And you will have to know him better, right? And thanks to the topics you can talk with him about anything! And this is not about just "prince". It can be a friend, or coworker. I think you understand my point.
13. Some of them are interesting, but others seem pretty boring.

8. What is the most and the least interesting unit of the course?

1. Almost all the topics of interest
2. The 6 unit is The most interesting unit, Relationships The 8 is the less interesting unit
3. Topics about relationships, travel and food.
4. All of them are interesting and useful. It is a lot of new information in everyone
5. The most interesting unit for me was Relationships and the least interesting unit was Managing life.
6. I cannot single out a particular unit. I have interest to topics such as: "Family life", "Food choices" and "Relationships"
7. For me the most interesting topic about food "Food choices"
The most interesting it is food, the least interesting is relationships.
8. I cannot single out one unit because they are same, it is a fact.
9. All threads are almost equally usual. I can talk about anything with passion.
10. To my mind, all the units are of interest.
11. Most likely, yes
12. The most interesting unit for me was 'Food choices' and the least one was 'What if'
I don't remember the name of topic, but I like that thing with "REALLY?!", "OH, I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!" It was very funny. The least - is about food. It's just about how much I like eating, but our classes in the morning, and when you are very hungry, you see all that pictures with delicious colorful Lord's gifts.
13. Most interesting for me were the topics about travel and natural phenomena.

9. Is it possible to train teamwork skills?

1. Definitely yes. In the classroom we always speak English to each other.
2. Yes it is possible
3. Of course it's possible. It is a very good method.
4. Yes, I think so. In units there are many tasks that require teamwork, and I like it.
5. Of course you can. Sometimes it is good practice. These tasks help to learn to speak a foreign language.

6. I think it is possible.
7. I have not noticed this program offering special tasks for developing teamwork skills. Well, yes, there are exercises such as "Work in pairs", but such exercises can be found in other books.
8. Of course. At class we often do some discussions together, we think about different situations and find solution using our English skills.
9. No, you do not improve their skills on the language without the teamwork.
10. Yes, it is
11. No, it is impossible
12. I think yes. At class we often do some discussions together, we try to know each other better, complete tasks with creating dialogs. It's kind of cool.
13. This experiment teaches us work in team.

10. Do PDF files, which accompany each lesson of the online book, help you to acquire knowledge?

1. Yes, I always download them and it help me
2. Yes, pdf files help
3. I didn't know that there are PDF files. Really. I did not use PDF files.
4. There is a useful information in them
5. PDF files to help us acquire knowledge. It is also a kind of workout for the mind.
6. Yes, in these files a lot of useful information for assignments.
7. PDF files are good.
8. Yes, I can find short information and basic grammar in PDF files
9. It's all helpful. You can understand your mistake and solve the problem faster.
10. Yes, it helps me to acquire knowledge.
11. I don't use any PDF files while the experiment
12. Yes
13. It helps a lot. You can understand your mistake and solve the problem faster.

11. Is it helpful that the online workbook gives keys to exercises?

1. Maybe, but I do not use them
2. Yes , good, the book gives the right decisions , otherwise , the test is unrealistic to go, not knowing how to answer to score
3. Yes, when there were difficulties I used keys.
4. Sometimes
5. Yes, it helps to do the tasks, you can test yourself.
6. The only positive thing about the experiment
7. Key answers are great.
8. It cheaters thing, but it's necessary in conditions of large amount of bugs.
9. Yes, of course. They provide an opportunity to test yourself and to correct errors.
10. Yes, because sometimes you spend a lot of time to find a mistake that you made in exercise and keys can save your time and nervous
11. Yes, it helps a lot
12. It kind of cheaters thing, but it is very helpful. I often make little mistakes, like no dot in the end of sentence, or missing "to" or something. I like the possibility to check myself.
13. Yes, of course. Sometimes it's difficult without keys..

12. Do you spend more time on doing English homework now than you used to?

1. Yes, I spend more time on doing English homework than ever before, but it is useful.
2. Yes I spend more time than spent before on English lesson
3. Yes, much more. But I no longer go deep into the language.
4. Yes, I spend about two hours to do English homework.
5. Yes, I began to spend more time performing tests online.
6. I began to spend more time on English.
7. Yes, but it is doesn't work.
8. I really began to spend more time doing my home task.
9. Actually, yes. I didn't do almost any homework ever. Then I should go to the website and do something.
10. Yes, before teacher gave less homework, but now we do it to each lessons
11. Yes, now I spend more time doing my homework
12. Actually, yes. I'm very lazy person, so before - I didn't done ANY homework ever. And now - I do it every week, just like clocks. But sometimes I'm still lazy about last task with long written answer and it isn't good actually, but I'm working on it.
13. No. The time is the same.

As you can see, the opinions are different but the positive attitude prevails. I would like to say that such concepts as ELearning and blended learning cover more and more educational institutions both in Europe and in Russia, and our responsibility, as representatives of Russian educational school, is not to alienate from European

education but try to become an integral part of it, because our objective as teachers is to teach, to bring up, and to develop, and this objective is universal.