

## Hands On An Initiative for the Development of the Esp Teaching and Learning

**Paola Gherardelli**

E-mail: [paola.gherardelli@gmail.com](mailto:paola.gherardelli@gmail.com)  
ISIS Leonardo da Vinci (Italy)

### Abstract

The increasingly competitive nature of the economy and the ever-changing technologies have had a remarkable impact on education.

Consequently ESP (English for Specific Purposes) has become one of the prominent areas of EFL. Nowadays the knowledge of English related to specific disciplines is a must in most working sectors.

So far the overall results of ESP teaching and learning have been quite unsatisfactory. Most textbooks are out-of-date, uninteresting and unrelated to the students' specialisations and the requirements of the world of work. Teachers of English are given no support in teaching technical subjects they frequently know little about.

This has frequently resulted in low students' motivation and learning.

In order to address these issues an innovative initiative called 'Hands On' has been carried out in the Leonardo Da Vinci Institute since the year 2006.

The initiative - promoted by Paola Gherardelli, expert in ESP and textbook writer - has been carried out with the headmaster's approval and in cooperation with many of the Institute's teachers of English and of specific subjects.

This initiative is based on practical, learner-centred activities (such as projects, presentations etc.). These activities are strictly related to the students' specific disciplines and allow them to learn by doing, work together and express their potential while using the English language.

I will describe the objectives of the initiative, the various activities done focusing on how new technologies and the internet have been successfully integrated with the initiative's practical approach.

I will also talk about the positive impact of this approach on the students and about the results achieved in terms of motivation and learning.

This work is meant to share the initiative's approach and results, demonstrate the potential of new technologies and the Internet in ESP, involve other teachers and experts and eventually create an online community.