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## Bridging the gap from intermediate to advanced proficiency with higher-order thinking skills and content knowledge

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### Abstract

Traditional university Chinese programs aim to produce students who can function at what the ACTFL Language Proficiency Guidelines considers the 'advanced' level. However, unless students spend significant time studying abroad, most non-heritage speakers have difficulty moving past the 'intermediate' level of proficiency. In order for students to function at the advanced level, they must also develop content knowledge on a variety of topics beyond 'the self', about the community and the world. Moreover, students must also develop intellectual maturity and be able to think critically and analytically, to synthesize and connect content learned outside the language class with the course content. Finally, students need to use their language skills to express complex ideas in Chinese. This paper discusses developing Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in students through the integration of specific assignments, in-class activities, and the introduction of course content, in order to help students move from the intermediate to advanced level of proficiency.

KEYWORDS: ORAL PROFICIENCY; CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS; DEVELOPING ADVANCED PROFICIENCY; AUDIO JOURNALS

### 摘要:

美國大學的中文課程一般都希望他們的學生能夠達到《美國外語教學委員會的口語能力分級標準》所謂的高級水平。但是除非學生出國，花一段較長的時間留學，專門學習中文，一般不能超越〈中級〉水平，而達不到〈

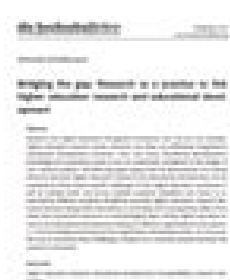
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Bridging the gap. Research as a practice to link higher education research & educational development

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**Schlagworte:** Hochschullehre Forschung, educational development, higher education research, incompatibility, research integration

Research into higher education has gained momentum over the last two decades. Higher education research results, however, are often not sufficiently integrated in educational development processes. Also, vice versa, educational development's knowledge and experience tends to be not extensively considered in the design of new research projects. The following paper argues that the phenomenon of a mutual alienness between higher education research and educational development can be explained by three system-specific challenges: Firstly, higher education constitutes itself at multiple levels and across multiple academic disciplines and hence is researched by different academic disciplines; secondly, higher education research fluctuates between being either descriptive or activating and consequently suffers from either lack of practical relevance or methodological rigor; thirdly, higher education research and educational development belong to different organisational sub-systems, i. e. the knowledge-producing and the organisation developing system. As one possible way to overcome these challenges, research as a common practice between the systems is advocated.

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