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TO BREAK THROUGH THE BOTTLENECK OF TALENT TRAINING – INTERNATIONAL SOMMELIER TRAINING OF CHINA BAIJIU COLLEGE

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ABSTRACT

Talent training is an important function of higher education, which reflects the philosophy of schooling and the management characteristics of colleges and universities. The cultivation of English talents in China began with the introduction of the western mode of higher education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and gradually formed two characteristics of professional education and general education. In different periods, the formation of its training mechanism was restricted and influenced by the political, economic, cultural and educational factors, and there were distinct characteristics of the times in the concept of talent-training, curriculum setting, teaching methods and the construction of teachers' team. [1] At present, in the context of transformation and development of colleges in China, promoting the transformation and development of local colleges and universities, establishing and improving the application-oriented and innovative talent training mechanism is an effective way to solve further the structural contradictions and homogenization tendency of higher education. To study and grasp the basic framework of the training mode of international sommelier of China Baijiu College, to make clear the historical context of international sommelier training, and to analyze its basic mode and summarize its experience and lessons, is of great significance for enriching the relevant theories of English talent training in China.

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INTRODUCTION

Employment Status of English Majors: Due to the need of economic globalization and international communication and cooperation, English major has become overheating. Most universities in China have set up English major. Besides, the enrollment-expanding and the catering to the market blindly has led to the gradual loss of competitive advantage for English majors. In addition, with the advancement of globalization and the deepening of international exchanges and cooperation, and with the adjustment of national economic structure and the policy change of English college entrance examination, English majors without other expertise are at a disadvantage in the workplace. The market demand for English majors is getting higher and higher, and therefore the problem of low-employment is also getting increasingly prominent. Moreover, from the perspective of society, due to the rapid development of China's economy, students majoring in English only are no longer able to adapt to the needs for the

development of society. Enterprises prefer inter-disciplinary talents with "English + other expertise". Then how to help English majors to solve the problem of employment is a pivotal problem to be solved by the state and universities. On the whole, college students, as high-level human resources, have a higher position in the labor market. However, the employment difficulties of English majors have been troubling universities, government and society in recent years. The reason lies in the fact that the teaching concept of some universities does not conform to the needs of the society and the teaching content is out of line with the market structure. Therefore, the fundamental way to solve the employment difficulty of English majors is to cultivate inter-disciplinary talents with practical skills and innovative thoughts, that is, the "English + other expertise" talents training mode.

English Majors Looking for a Breakthrough at the Time of Educational Reform: In the latest report about the adjustment of undergraduate majors, by the ministry of education in 2018, English majors in five universities will be revoked and more than a dozen foreign language departments in Zhejiang province have started to "shut down and transform". Besides,

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some famous university in China has abolished almost all the English majors from bachelor's degree to master's degree, and replaced them with inter-disciplinary talents program of science and technology... In terms of the source of students, the number of students coming for English major itself is decreasing year by year, and on the contrary the number of students transferring out from English major is increasing every year.[2] Facing the situation of being in deep trouble, seeking the way of transformation and development actively is the fundamental way for English majors in colleges and universities to survive. With the continuous development of social economy and the changing relationship between talents supply and demand, China is opening up to the outside world to a greater extent. At the same time, the demand for college English majors is also rising. In the deep economic structure adjustment, and under the background of fast industrial upgrading, promoting English major's transformation-development, establishing a practical and innovative talent training mechanism, enhancing the local colleges' capacity for regional economy and social development services, setting up the correct cognition of "English + other expertise" cultivation mode, are an urgent task for English majors to seek sound development.

Serving Local Economies and Strengthening College-Enterprise Cooperation: To strengthen the cooperation between colleges/universities and enterprises, and to choose the road of "combining production, study and research" is the requirement for application-oriented college education, and is also the fundamental requirement of adapting to the society and the market. Strengthening college-enterprise cooperation in college English majors is conducive to the construction of curriculum system, the cultivation of "double-qualified" teachers and the improvement of graduate's employment. Only by this way can the "English + other expertise" and application-oriented talents be cultivated. [3] The English majors in local colleges and universities should, according to the requirements of the transformation, base themselves on the regional economy, develop characteristic curriculums, combine society's demand with teaching, cultivate application-oriented English talents, and construct a diversified English teaching system and curriculum. Therefore, the foreign language department of Chinese Baijiu (Liquor) Colleges should have such theory on college management as "being based on local economy and culture, innovating talents training mode, and being integrated into industrial development", and then cultivate "English + other expertise" talents, who are with solid language ability, profound humanistic quality, and who are familiar with local cultural characteristics, so as to strive to set an example for colleges and universities to serve the local economy, and strengthen college-enterprise cooperation.

"Culture Goes Abroad" Strategy: To introduce Chinese culture to the world is the realistic requirement of national interest for China, and is an important measure to maintain China's cultural security. Since the implementation of the "culture goes abroad" strategy, with the policy-support of the central government and the local governments, the pace of China's strategy "culture goes abroad" has been accelerating, showing a good situation in which all sectors of society jointly promote "culture goes abroad", and has achieved some social and economic benefits.[4] However, in practice, there are still some problems in the mechanism, for example: the international influence of cultural media is weak, the information dissemination is unidirectional, especially the

local government's objectives of the implementation of the strategy is not clear. Chinese baijiu/liquor culture is extensive and profound, which is the crystallization of Chinese traditional culture. In the long history of the Chinese nation, Chinese baijiu/liquor culture, as a special form of culture, has a unique status, has almost permeated into all areas of social life, and has been an important part of our brilliant culture. To introduce Chinese liquor culture and to popularize Chinese liquor knowledge throughout the world is an effective way for some qualified local universities to seek the transformation and development of English majors. Cultivating international sommelier talents with international vision, innovative spirit and practical ability, and with solid English foundation, liquor knowledge foundation and intercultural communication ability, is an effective strategy and specific measure to construct the talent training mode of "English + other expertise", as well as to strengthen local colleges' service ability for regional economy and social development.

The Lack of Relevant Research: The concept of a "sommelier" has its origins from foreign country. It should be noted that the liquor implied in the term "sommelier" refers to wine instead of Chinese baijiu/liquor. Therefore, the research and cultivation of "sommelier" at home and abroad are just based on such a concept, namely the wine. For example, the International Wine Guild (IWG) in Denver (U.S.) is an internationally recognized Wine education organization. At present, it provides professional courses and training in 7 countries, including basic professional education for wine sommeliers, and it is authorized to award diploma and qualification to wine sommeliers. For another example, searching one of China's most authoritative databases, CNKI, on the subject of "sommelier," we can get such a result: a total of 24 articles were published, including 3 from business newspapers and 11 from pre-2009 studies.[5] Worse more, the core content of these journal articles lies in just three aspects: the research on the relationship between the profession of sommelier and the wine industry chain; the exploration of methods to improve the wine-appreciation ability and skills of sommeliers; and the discussion on the phenomenon of high salary of sommeliers. However, the perspectives of these studies are far from those of the international sommelier training philosophy of China Baijiu College. The international sommelier of China Baijiu College does not mean the waiter or waitress in a hotel or restaurant, or the bartender in the bar. Instead, it refers to the international sommelier talents who are with international vision, innovative spirit and practical ability, who are with solid English foundation, liquor knowledge foundation and intercultural communication ability. Moreover, they are also the intercultural communication "envoy" who disseminate Chinese baijiu/liquor knowledge, culture and brewing art. Based on this concept, to explore and study the cultivation mechanism of international sommelier is of great significance.

The Significance of Theoretical Guidance: Combining with the local economic and cultural characteristics to cultivate the international sommelier is a brand new exploration by the foreign language school of China Baijiu College. It is an effort of the foreign language school of China Baijiu College in response to the application-oriented transformation & development policy of local colleges and universities. Most importantly, it is also an attempt of the foreign language school of China Baijiu College to build an "English + other expertise" talent training mode. As mentioned above, the

practice of this talent cultivation mode, which is with local economic and cultural characteristics, has almost no previous experience for reference. It needs a strong theoretical support, to make clear the social background and historical origin of this training mode, to discuss the relationship between its concept and goal, to analyze the construction of its curriculum system and the methods of training, etc. The aim is to have a comprehensive and overall grasp of the international sommelier training system and mechanism, so as to continuously improve and mature it, break through and surpass it, and to make it more innovative and creative. And this is exactly why the concept of this topic came into being.

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