

*Original Paper*

# Cultivating Interdisciplinary Foreign Language Talents in Higher Education in Western China under the Background of the “B&R”

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## **Abstract**

*There is an increasing demand for interdisciplinary foreign language talents who master multiple foreign languages and cultures, innovation ability, and management ability, especially under the “Belt and Road” background. However, cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in western China is facing many dilemmas. In order to meet the interdisciplinary foreign language talents demand of the international economic development along the “Belt and Road”, the author puts forward some strategies based on symbiosis theory adopting a comparative method. This article aims to explore methods of cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in higher education in western China and supply high-quality interdisciplinary foreign language talents for the “Belt and Road”.*

## **Keywords**

*Interdisciplinary foreign language talent, foreign language education, higher education, western China, the “Belt and Road” Initiative*

## **1. Introduction**

In September 2013, President Xi Jinping proposed the “Belt and Road” Initiative (BRI), also known as the “Silk Road Economic Belt” and the “21st-Century Maritime Silk Road” (Ingrid, 2021). The promotion of this project needs active participation of many factors, but interdisciplinary foreign language talents are the most critical and active factors for building the “Belt and Road” (B&R). Cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents should reflect the deep integration of the tool and the humanism of foreign language education, and integration of foreign language, politics, finance, trade, management, law, and other related professional knowledge. Wen and Si (2018) summarized the

development process of interdisciplinary foreign language talents training in China and divided the reform and practice process into four stages: the initial stage from the 1940s to reform and opening; the experimental formation stage from the early stage of reform and opening to 1999; the mature stage from 2000 to 2010; the critical reflection stage from 2010 to now. Many documents include cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents, for example, “Some Advice on the Reform of Undergraduate Education in Foreign Language Majors Facing the 21st Century,” (1998), “The Outline of College English Teaching for English Majors” (2000), “The National Standards for the Class Teaching of the Undergraduate Course of Common Colleges and Universities (Foreign Language Literature)” (2018), and “Foreign Language Literature Professional Undergraduate Course of Common Colleges and Universities Teaching Guide” (2020).

So far, the relative administrators have not adjusted the higher education majors and disciplines in western China in time according to the B&R strategy. Therefore, the talents’ supply of foreign language and other majors cannot meet the demand of the B&R. Furthermore, many problems in higher education in western China exist in cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents, such as single-subject training mode, incomplete coverage of the non-common language, large scale of common language, and low integration with related majors, which lead to the fragmentation and simplification of the knowledge structure of college graduates in western China. However, constructing the B&R needs interdisciplinary foreign language talents, who should have not only excellent professional knowledge and skills, but also good foreign language expression ability. In other words, it is to achieve the “inter-discipline of knowledge, skills, and thinking” (Chen, 2018). In order to solve above problems, this paper tries to explore the dilemmas and find the strategies in cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents, and aims to explore methods of cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in higher education in western China and supply high-quality interdisciplinary foreign language talents for the B&R. The innovation of the present paper is based on symbiosis theory and supplies the macro symbiosis of “GIURP” (government, industry, university, research, and practice). Research questions of this paper focus on: (1) what are the dilemmas in cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in higher education in western China? (2) which strategies should be adopted in prompting foreign language talents’ development in higher education western China?

The current paper is based on symbiosis theory. German biologist Anton de Barry proposed the term “symbiosis” in 1879. The symbiosis in biological theory refers to the relationship of common survival and co-evolution between different organisms according to certain substances. The symbiosis is the relationship formed by symbiotic units in a symbiotic environment according to a symbiotic mode. This “relationship” is the result of the joint action of symbiotic units, symbiotic mode and symbiotic environment (Feng et al., 2012). Symbiotic unit refers to the basic energy exchange unit that can constitute a symbiotic system or symbiotic relationship. The interaction between symbiotic units exists in a certain environment, in other words, the symbiotic environment, which can be understood as the

sum of all factors outside the symbiotic unit (Majumdar, 1997). How symbiotic units interact and co-exist in a symbiotic environment is a symbiotic model. Mutualism is one of the symbiotic modes, that is a bidirectional resource output mode in which new resources generated by symbiotic units under the action of symbiotic interface are distributed among symbiotic units.

Since the mid-20th century, symbiosis theory has been applied in social science. Until the 21st century, Ehrenfeld J. applied symbiosis theory to industrial economy, which further enriched the content of symbiosis theory, such as learning mechanism (Ehrenfeld, 2004). In symbiosis theory, there is a dynamic relationship between symbiotic unit and symbiotic environment. While the symbiotic unit is optimized, the external symbiotic environment correspondingly gets the evolution of reciprocity (Yang, 2010). In other words, higher education in western China as a symbiotic unit, with the development of the society in the B&R environment such as policy, technology, economic form a dynamic symbiotic relationship, and in this relationship contains the corresponding symbiotic unit. Higher education in western China promotes the evolution and development of other symbiotic units in the symbiotic system for mutual benefit.

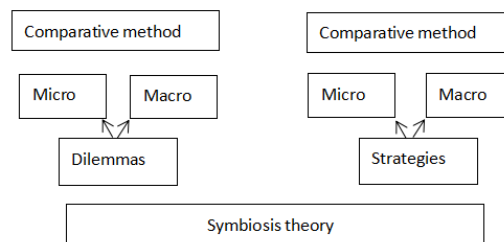
At the micro level, the symbiosis of the training of interdisciplinary talents in higher education is synergistic symbiosis in the environment of colleges and universities in western China, so at the micro level, it reflects the integration between disciplines. At the macro level, colleges and universities need to cooperate with the government, industry, research institute, enterprise. In the symbiotic system of training interdisciplinary talents in higher education, the interaction between symbiotic units is not a closed and independent development, but in symbiotic environment which is the B&R environment in this paper. Mutualism among symbiotic unites is the ideal mode of symbiosis and the most stable state of symbiosis. The cultivation of interdisciplinary foreign language talents will change from the mode of professional education, general education to interdisciplinary talents education, but they will dynamically coexist in a long time.

The formation of symbiosis is not the simple superposition of three symbiotic elements but dynamic interaction. The cultivation of interdisciplinary foreign language talents in essence is integration of knowledge and subject in higher education and integration of “GIURP”, and form symbiotic mode in the B&R environment, so the symbiosis theory could be the basis of analyzing cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in higher education in western China under the background of the B&R.

## **2. Method**

The participants of the present paper are foreign language talents in higher education in western China. The reason for choosing foreign language talents in higher education in western China is that they cannot meet the demands of the B&R. The paper adopts a comparative method based on symbiosis theory. According to a comparative method, the dilemmas in cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in higher education in western China are divided into the limitations of higher

education as symbiotic unit in micro symbiosis and the international “GIURP” (government, industry, university, research, and practice) disjointed in macro symbiosis. Accordingly, the strategies includes micro and macro for interdisciplinary foreign language talents’ development in western china. The micro strategy is to break through the limitations of higher education, while the macro strategy has two aspects as follow. (1) Play the role of think tanks and rationally construct the mode of integration of the “GIURP” as symbiotic system in international education. (2) Universities and enterprises should connect and form a collaborative education community like symbiosis system. The process of design is illustrated in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. The Process of Design**

### 3. Result

According to two research questions above, based on the symbiosis theory, the result is as follows.

#### 3.1 *The Dilemmas in Cultivating Interdisciplinary Foreign Language Talents in Western China*

There are two aspects of the dilemmas in cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in western China. It includes the limitation of higher education lacking area studies and imperfect curriculum setting in micro, and “GIURP” disconnection in cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in macro.

(1) Area studies talents lack in interdisciplinary foreign language. First of all, area studies teams for interdisciplinary foreign languages are weak. On the one hand, area study level is not ideal. The depth and breadth of research lack in higher education in western China, as well as a lack of connection with the actual demand in area study for interdisciplinary foreign language talents along the B&R. On the other hand, higher education in western China lacks area study scholars with great academic influence, and their research results are scattered. Second, higher education in western China has insufficient cooperation awareness of area study. On the one hand, researchers in higher education in western China have insufficient awareness of academic contact with each other in area study, cross-campus, and cross-regional cooperation. On the other hand, constructing higher education resource-sharing platforms for area study in western China is insufficient. In addition, there is little coherence between the undergraduate and postgraduate level of area studies in the interdisciplinary foreign language curriculum in western China. Last, there are some problems between foreign languages and area studies integrating. Foreign language teaching and area studies teaching are not integrating in higher education

in western China.

Imperfect curriculum setting exists in cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents. The curriculum is the key to cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents. A survey on the quality of postgraduate education in China in 2017 showed that international postgraduate students' satisfaction with the curriculum, teaching methods, and evaluation methods of postgraduate training in western China was low (Liu, 2017). Most higher education in western China cannot meet the requirements on curriculum setting, mainly reflected in four aspects: (1) The number of interdisciplinary foreign language faculty is insufficient. (2) Compared with the proportion of English classes, the proportion of other languages is too small. (3) The curriculum lacks the culture along the B&R. (4) The primary evaluation mechanism for a subject is the institution assessment, which exists many problems.

(2) The confusing situation of the international "GIURP" is severe in cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in higher education in western China. Constructing the B&R service by higher education and enterprises is a single operation with localization and fragmentation. It is difficult to establish a complete service system covering countries along the B&R. In implementing the BRI, the integration level of international "GIURP" in western China is relatively superficial, with low quality and poor effect, and it is still in the exploratory stage.

In a word, under the BRI, interdisciplinary foreign language talents in higher education in western China are faced with significant dilemmas such as the limitations of high education itself including the lack of area studies talents and imperfect curriculum, and the disconnection among "GIURP". In order to cultivate excellent interdisciplinary foreign language talents, it is urgent to propose effective solutions.

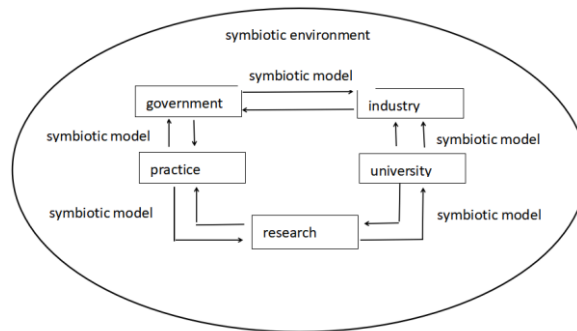
### *3.2 The Strategies for Interdisciplinary Foreign Language Talents' Development in Western China*

The Strategies include micro and macro. The micro strategy is to open higher education to the world, and it has become an essential way of the country's diplomatic strategy (Tang et al., 2017). Higher education should break through the limitations of itself as symbiotic unit, cooperate with other institutions, and form a collaborative education community. According to the limitations of higher education in western China, there are two aspects to break through the limitations of higher education in western China including setting interdisciplinary foreign language area studies and optimizing the curriculum setting. Interdisciplinary foreign language area study is complex, which includes area studies as subject, area researchers, language and cooperation at least. Area researchers are first in area study in cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents, but before that, area study is a subject. In addition, language and cooperation are necessary parts.

The curriculum setting plays a vital role in constructing the interdisciplinary foreign language talents training model. The curriculum setting as a concrete embodiment of the talent training model, it is the important way to achieve interdisciplinary foreign language talent training objectives. The curriculum setting of most colleges and universities in western China cannot meet the social demand for interdisciplinary foreign language talents. The following four aspects could optimize the curriculum

setting: improving faculty construction, setting English and other languages services, attaching importance to the cross-cultural education curriculum, and attach importance to the cross-cultural education curriculum.

According to the international “GIURP” disconnection, there are two development paths for the macro “GIURP” symbiosis. (1) Play the role of think tanks and rationally construct the mode of integration of the “GIURP” as symbiotic system in international education. (2) Universities and enterprises should connect and form a collaborative education community like symbiosis system. It is dynamic symbiosis between symbiotic unit and environment. “GIURP” as five symbiotic unites have feedback on the B&R as symbiotic environment, so “GIURP” can optimize the B&R. On the contrary, the B&R effects the “GIURP”. Figure 2 illustrates the symbiosis of interdisciplinary foreign language talents cultivation.



**Figure 2. The Symbiosis of Interdisciplinary Foreign Language Talents Cultivation**

#### 4. Discussion

In this part, the dilemmas in cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in western China were analyzed, then the strategies were proposed.

##### 4.1 The Dilemmas in Cultivating Interdisciplinary Foreign Language Talents in Western China

###### 4.1.1 The Characteristics of Interdisciplinary Foreign Language Talents

The main characteristics of interdisciplinary foreign language talents under the B&R are good at language, familiarity with area cultures, international policies, and management. In addition, innovative thinking plays an essential part as well.

Firstly, interdisciplinary foreign language talents have good language skills and are familiar with area cultures. According to *Modern Linguistic Theory*, “Language is human’s most important communication tool; Language is a system of signs; Language is the tool of human thinking and the carrier of culture” (Shu, 1999, p. 22). Language is the basis of the communication, cooperation, and even competition of different countries involved in the B&R. Constructing the B&R the communication mission of language is becoming more and more prominent. If one does not master or understand other countries’ language in the intercultural communication of the B&R, they may misunderstand each other. The countries along the B&R have many languages, so the cross-cultural

communication between the countries along the B&R requires multi-lingual talents, including interdisciplinary common languages and non-common languages talents. Cross-culture competence, as one of the core competence indicators of foreign language majors, is included in the training specification of The National Standards for Undergraduate Teaching Quality of Foreign Language Majors in Colleges and Universities (Sun, 2016) and the objective of A Guide to College English Teaching (Cai, 2017). Cross-culture competence training has become a hot topic in the new foreign language education reform (Perry & Southwell, 2011). The interdisciplinary foreign language talents need to be sensitive, tolerant, and flexible in dealing with cultural differences to meet the demand of extensive international communication.

Secondly, the bottleneck of the BRI is talent, especially international management talents familiar with policies. The spirit of equality, cooperation, and win-win formulating regional cooperation plans will help the western China and countries along the B&R establish cooperative relations and enhance mutual trust and friendship. Specialized high-level management talents are beneficial to give full play to the advantages of characteristic resources, and cooperating with countries along the B&R in the economy, infrastructure construction, and cultural exchanges. Therefore, there is a demand for specialized high-level management talents.

Thirdly, innovative talents are significant in the BRI. According to the “Belt and Road” Talent White Paper overseas talents of state-owned enterprises are facing the dilemma of a shortage of innovative senior talents (Wu, 2017). However, the B&R needs the innovative foreign language talents with a complete knowledge structure and solid theoretical foundation, reasonable academic frontier knowledge, a strong sense of criticism, and familiarity with international policy. The B&R has involved many characteristics, such as many countries and regions, wide fields, and many beliefs (Xie, 2017). It is necessary to break the restrictions of traditional concepts in the process of the B&R construction and use innovative thinking concepts and methods to accelerate the pace of construction. It means that interdisciplinary foreign language talents can participate in the B&R construction better only if they have strong innovation consciousness and ability.

In all, proficient language is fundamental to cultivate interdisciplinary foreign language talents under the B&R. In addition, it is necessary to be familiar with area cultures, international policies, and management. Last, interdisciplinary foreign language talents possessing innovative thinking could serve the B&R better.

#### 4.1.2 The Limitations of Higher Education as Symbiotic Unit in Micro Symbiosis

Cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents confront lacking area studies talents and imperfect curriculum setting in higher education in western China.

Area study is a multidisciplinary field, and it is a comprehensive study on the humanities, geography, politics, economy, and society of a specific country or region (Guo, 2016). Recently, under the BRI, many colleges and universities in western China have set the enrollment direction of master’s and doctor’s degrees with the area studies along the B&R as the research object.

Some world-class colleges and universities in developed countries have set up disciplines related to area studies from undergraduate education to postgraduate education. For example, Harvard University has set up area studies majors in undergraduate programs, such as East Asian studies, South Asian studies, and African studies. Furthermore, area studies have problems such as uneven distribution of research objects and significant differences in the degree of attention. Area studies of colleges and universities in western China mainly focus on a few big countries, but the research on other small countries is little. Most of the countries along the B&R are small and medium-sized countries, leading to academic circles ignore, such as the Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Egypt. Not only that, those countries have not received great attention yet (Wang, 2016).

In addition, foreign language teaching does not involve the content of area studies, and the courses of area studies are mainly related to area studies and there is little penetration of foreign language knowledge and skills, and most of teaching languages are Chinese. Such course arrangement and teaching mode make foreign languages and area studies work separately, which is not conducive to integrating foreign languages and area studies knowledge.

Imperfect curriculum setting is another limitation of higher education in micro symbiosis. Most higher education in western China cannot meet the requirements on curriculum setting, mainly reflected in four aspects: (1) The number of interdisciplinary foreign language faculty is insufficient. Because of lacking adequate interdisciplinary foreign language faculty of non-common language, there are little related non-common language courses. In addition, because most foreign language teachers are not good at other professional knowledge, their teaching methods only fit language training, which splits the connection between major knowledge and language. (2) Compared with the proportion of English classes, the proportion of other languages is too small. Foreign language majors in colleges and universities pay too much attention to the common interdisciplinary languages, and ignore the interdisciplinary non-common languages. Therefore, it is not beneficial to the B&R. Most colleges and universities still attach great importance to language training and ignore professional courses. It leads to college students' lack of systematic professional knowledge, which is not suitable for their competitiveness after graduation. (3) The curriculum lacks the culture along the B&R. Most colleges and universities do not offer courses that analyze the culture of the countries along the B&R. Lacking a comprehensive understanding of other cultures along the B&R, cultivating disciplinary foreign language talents cannot meet the demands of internationalization. At present, college English teaching in local colleges and universities is generally based on the language knowledge, ignoring cultural penetration, lacking cross-cultural knowledge and ability of countries along the B&R. In addition, cross-cultural experience has not received enough attention. (4) The primary evaluation mechanism for a subject is the institution assessment, which exists many problems. For examples, China's evaluation of colleges and universities paid attention to the evaluation results, in which quantified data are too much. The written examination is still the primary evaluation tool, while ignores students' ability to solve practical problems.



#### 4.1.3 The International “GIURP” Disjointed in Macro Symbiosis

The integration of international “GIURP” in higher education in western China started late and developed slowly due to the double restrictions of educational resources and concepts such as human, financial and material resources. Some understandings of the education “going global” are still limited to “the enterprises providing overseas internship bases for higher education and forming “order relationships” with enterprises to create conditions for college students entering enterprises after graduation (Zhang & Yang, 2021).

On the supply side of the structure, the effective implementation of international “GIURP” not only needs colleges and universities, and enterprises, but also needs government, and intermediary organizations, such as creating a loose environment for education, providing an open platform, and supplying high quality resources. However, in the present situation, except for the strong support of government policies, other conditions are still under construction, which cannot fully meet the practical needs of large-scale international education integration of “GIURP” in western China. Universities and enterprises have not established a collaborative service platform for integrating international “GIURP” in the B&R. On the one hand, it will lead to a passive situation such as the disconnection between talent training and enterprise needs. On the other hand, it is impossible to coordinate with the whole industry, which efficiently reduces the popularity and effectiveness of universities and enterprises in promoting the international integration of “GIURP”. It is difficult to form a long-term mechanism to serve the B&R and successful experience for reference, replication, and promotion (Zhang and Yang, 2021).

#### 4.2 *The Strategies for Interdisciplinary Foreign Language Talents’ Development in Western China*

According to the dilemmas in cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in western China, the author proposed some strategies.

##### 4.2.1 Break Through the Limitations of Higher Education as Symbiotic Unit in Micro Symbiosis

###### 4.2.1.1 Set Interdisciplinary Foreign Language Area Studies

(1) Area studies include three stages which are the initial stage, the development stage, and the mature stage. The initial stage is characterized by starting from scientific research and setting up area research institutions to engage in relevant research. The development stage is the rapid development of area research institutions and the beginning of setting relevant disciplines. Interdisciplinary foreign language talents cultivation in colleges and universities have started to set up disciplines related to area studies. The characteristic of the mature stage is that the area study has become one of the advantages and development strategies of the colleges and universities. The mature stage, area research institutions have solid scientific research strength and the prominent role of think tanks with significant academic influence and have covered significant countries and regions worldwide. Colleges and universities in western China should determine their stage according to their characteristics and gradually develop area studies of interdisciplinary foreign languages.

(2) Area researchers play an essential role in area studies. Area researchers are interdisciplinary talents

who combine foreign languages with area knowledge and ability, which is in line with the BRI and the needs of Chinese enterprises to “go global” (Wang, 2017). Some scholars believe that young teachers who have not yet obtained doctoral degrees should study for degrees related to area studies and transform to area studies in teaching and research using educational reform projects at all levels and application guidelines for scientific research projects (Wang & Yao, 2019).

In scientific research cooperation, the symbiotic unit is the researchers participating in the cooperation. The researchers participating in the cooperation should devote themselves to the cooperation, contribute their own knowledge resources, achieve benefit and risk sharing, and jointly realize the goal of scientific research cooperation based on the requirements of mutual benefit. Scientific research cooperation should continue to innovate and diversify among colleges and universities in western China and attract high-level researchers at home and abroad. At the same time, consider expanding the enrollment scale, carrying out more teaching exchanges, cooperation and guidance in scientific research projects, and exchange teaching experience and research methods in relevant scientific research fields.

Researchers in cooperation are dynamic and will change dynamically with the change of symbiotic mode and symbiotic environment. Therefore, the instability brought by the researchers in the cooperation cannot be ignored. Area researchers has certain risks, so it is imperative to establish a sound knowledge protection mechanism and knowledge loss and compensation mechanism, and to implement the task division among the participants of scientific research cooperation for preventing the risks caused by negative behaviors such as knowledge leakage, free-rider and opportunism. Area research needs to establish a reasonable supervision and prevention mechanism, improve the internal management system, so as to reduce moral hazard in the process of scientific research cooperation, and promote the cooperation among researchers.

(3) The basis of area studies is language. According to the educational concept of the integration of content and language, mastering the language along the B&R is the premise and foundation of area research. Colleges and universities centering on language in western China should give full play to the function of think tanks in area research focusing on hot issues, producing high-quality research results, and providing major strategic decisions. Area knowledge is used as teaching materials for language skills courses, such as extensive reading, listening, conversation and translation. On the one hand, such courses are not only language courses but also area studies courses. On the other hand, the integration of speech training and professional content not only improves the language practice ability but also gains area knowledge.

(4) Cooperation in area studies can not be absent. Higher education in western China should cooperate with higher education in some areas along the B&R. On the one hand, some higher education in western China can fully use geographical advantages and professional advantages to cooperate with Central Asia. Higher education in western China should strengthen cooperation with higher education in area along the B&R to jointly train students at bachelor’s, master’s, and doctor’s levels through

various forms. Higher education in western China should carry out in-depth cooperation and exchanges with higher education in area along the B&R in scientific cooperation, cultural communication, and policy research. Higher education in western China can also select students to practice in international organizations or enterprises in batches to help students understand international rules and master the most cutting-edge international technical standards in practical activities (Gao, 2022). For example, higher education in western China and western Asia establish the joint laboratory, which is a practical action to area studies. On the other hand, higher education cooperates among colleges and universities in western China to establish the B&R area studies. Therefore, the government and education administrative department should give proper policy, urge higher education in western China to open educational resources, share the project of talent cultivation and the standard, and share the teaching content to serve area studies.

#### 4.2.1.2 Optimizing the Curriculum Setting

(1) Improving faculty construction could optimize the curriculum setting. An interdisciplinary foreign language teacher team with high quality is an essential guarantee for cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents. Interdisciplinary foreign language teachers should have a rich knowledge of both language and inter-subjectivity to meet the “dual-qualified” criteria set by the Ministry of Education (Wang, 2007).

(2) Both English and other languages services should be set for the B&R. The development of the B&R is dynamic, so the language plans should be adjusted. The basis of principle of a language plan is “minimum cost and maximum benefit”. Therefore, scientific research is basis of a language plan. English is hypercentral language (common language); The non-common language includes super-central language, central language, and periphery language (Zhang, 2022). Super-central language is a high influence in the world, such as Russian. Central language is used in one country or some countries, such as Malay. Peripheral language is little used, like Kyrgyz. Both common language and non-common language are important in curriculum setting. In addition, the curriculum setting of language should consider geography, influence, political environment, and etc.

(3) Attach importance to the cross-cultural education curriculum. Two points should be emphasized in cultivating students’ intercultural competence in interdisciplinary foreign language education. On the one hand, cultivating “cross-cultural” consciousness. On the other hand, cultivating a “cross-cultural” curriculum model. The cross-cultural awareness and ideas are reflected in teachers’ curriculum teaching design. Pre-class leading, in-class activities and after-class reinforcement should reflect the concept of cross-cultural cultivation. For example, “Ethnic Boundary Markers” in Unit 1 of the *New Era Interactive English Reading, Writing and Translating*, the concept of “cross-culture” is applied to all aspects of teaching in the design, such as the introduction of religious knowledge, distribution, and living customs. From the perspective of countries along the B&R, Christianity appears in some European and American countries, Islam mainly in some countries of Central Asia and West Asia, and Buddhism in some countries of Southeast Asia. Three religions cover many countries along the B&R,

and religious culture is an essential perspective and content of cultural studies.

In addition, it is an critical measure for local higher education to promote the development of students' cross-cultural competence and cultivate international talents to serve the B&R. It can guide students to understand and master cultural differences and diversity through simulated teaching situations or cross-cultural teaching cases (Gao, 2006). The overseas study, internship, and short-term training programs can promote students' understanding of foreign cultures and cross-cultural adaptation and reduce misunderstanding and enhance the sensitivity to cross-cultural interaction and cultural differences (Deardorff, 2006). Most of the languages and cultures are non-English in the process of the B&R construction. Therefore, the curriculum content should be changed from English related culture content to other languages and cultures.

(4) Standardizing the curriculum evaluation system. The written examination should not be the most evaluation tool. Students' classroom performance and their reports in the practical courses are as essential parts of the final assessment. Under the background of Sino-foreign cooperation, it is necessary to build a scientific evaluation system jointly by the government, universities, think tanks, and enterprises. The evaluation of interdisciplinary foreign language talents should take ability as the core, application ability as the center, and innovation ability as the driving force. In the evaluation practice, we should adhere to two principles. The first principle, the evaluation must be composed of experts who understand interdisciplinary foreign language, interdisciplinary foreign language teaching practice, and interdisciplinary foreign language evaluation theory. The second principle, the evaluation should be conducted under the state of scientific evaluation methods, process, and strict evaluation organizational discipline.

#### 4.2.2 Building Macro Symbiosis Mode of "GIURP"

Firstly, play the role of think tanks and rationally construct the mode of integration of the "GIURP" as symbiotic system in international education. After a long period of running schools, many colleges and universities in western China have a teaching staff with rich teaching experience and high scientific research levels and have built many solid disciplines and majors with a good reputation. However, in order to play a significant role in promoting the B&R education action, higher education in western China needs to strengthen the depth of cooperation with local governments, social organizations, multinational enterprises, to form a new cooperation mode of the "GIURP". The first is to build a think tank for integrating the "GIURP" in international education to strengthen systematic research on countries along the B&R. The second is to form the "GIURP" mode. Encourage enterprise experts to participate in the higher education personnel training work, who are familiar with the area of national policy and law and international economic operation rules. Enhance the practicability and pertinence of higher education in western China, and meet the social and market demands of the B&R countries. The third is to strengthen the government's overall planning function. The provincial government in western China should make full use of China's multilateral cooperation mechanisms, set bilateral, multilateral and global education platforms, explore mutual recognition of credits, and mutual granted degree, and

gradually eliminate the barriers to international education policy.

Secondly, universities and enterprises should connect and form a collaborative education community like symbiosis system. For improving the quality of service the B&R, many enterprises integrate with multinational companies along the B&R and try to achieve the “double subject” of enterprises and universities, complementary advantages, and win-win (Zhang, 2021). In the process of student internships and employment of short board, to meet the needs of the BRI, further perfect the talent training scheme. Strengthen contacts with international organizations and large enterprises to increase opportunities for internships and cooperation. Through various internship programs, students can understand the operation mode of international organizations and overseas enterprises as well as the culture, to improve students’ adaptability to a diverse international environment, and future overseas employment. Practical teaching can broaden students’ professional knowledge, create a suitable environment for vocational posts, cultivate students’ entrepreneurial spirit and innovative ability, and improve their professional quality and comprehensive ability. Set the laboratory center in higher education, where teachers and students simulate different roles in activities, carry out simulation teaching, and handle various businesses through computer simulation to get familiar with business processes. In addition, internship bases can be established jointly with various sectors and enterprises in the society, where college students can conduct course practice and graduation practice.

In sum, the BRI as symbiotic environment is not only a path for shared economic development but also a path for mutual learning among cultures. Although cultivating interdisciplinary foreign language talents in western China is facing many dilemmas under the background of the B&R, according to the actual situation, higher education in western China cultivates different types of interdisciplinary foreign language talents to meet the market demands of the BRI and promote China’s economic development based on symbiosis. There are some theoretical researches on the cultivation of interdisciplinary foreign language talents along the B&R but few empirical studies, leaving some research space for more empirical studies in the future.

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