

Cultivation of English Intercultural Communicative Competence in Vocational Undergraduate Universities in the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area: Current Situation, Challenges, and Pathways

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Abstract: The Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) features a high degree of openness to the outside world and the agglomerated development of cross-border trade, advanced manufacturing, and modern service industries, which imposes an urgent practical demand for the English intercultural communicative competence of high-level technical and skilled talents. As a new type of education within China's modern vocational education system, vocational undergraduate universities entrust College English courses with the important task of synergistically cultivating students' language proficiency, cultural literacy, and professional application abilities. Existing domestic and international studies have accumulated some research on Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in the field of vocational education; however, most domestic studies remain at the level of macroscopic strategy discussions and lack empirical investigations targeted at the vocational undergraduate context in the GBA, while foreign studies focus on overseas Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and fail to provide specific attention to China's unique vocational undergraduate education type. This study takes 25 College English teachers from a vocational undergraduate university in the GBA as survey subjects and conducts an empirical investigation using questionnaires, systematically examining the current status of teaching practices in College English intercultural communicative competence. The study finds that five major practical dilemmas exist: vocational undergraduate English teachers have biased perceptions of the intercultural needs of industrial talents in the GBA; teaching objectives are overly generalized and localized teaching resources are scarce; classroom instruction remains dominated by traditional lectures with insufficient immersive intercultural practice; participation in industry-education integration is low; and assessment tools for ICC are lacking. Based on the trinity cultivation logic of "language-culture-profession", this paper proposes practical pathways adapted to the industrial needs of the GBA from five dimensions: reconstruction of teaching objectives, development of localized teaching resources, innovation of classroom teaching models, construction of a dual-qualified teacher team, and establishment of a multidimensional and diversified evaluation system. This study aims to provide empirical references for the reform of College English courses in vocational undergraduate universities in the GBA and to serve the supply of internationally oriented technical and skilled talents for the region.

Keywords: Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area; vocational undergraduate education; College English; Intercultural Communicative Competence; application-oriented talents

1. Introduction

The Outline of the Development Plan for the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area clearly states that the Greater Bay Area is to be built into an internationally influential center for scientific and technological innovation. With the continuous increase in cross-border trade and commercial exchanges as well as international project cooperation, the market urgently needs high-level application-oriented talents who possess not only professional technical skills but also English communication and intercultural communicative competence. Vocational undergraduate education is a key component in China's endeavor to build a modern vocational education system. Distinct from regular undergraduate education and higher vocational (junior college) education, its core positioning lies in cultivating high-level technical and skilled talents for the frontline of industries,

emphasizing the coordinated development of professional abilities, foreign language application skills, and comprehensive cultural literacy. As a compulsory public basic course in vocational undergraduate universities, College English is no longer confined to the teaching of language knowledge points; cultivating students' intercultural communicative competence has become an important direction for curriculum reform.

Intercultural communicative competence refers to the comprehensive ability of an individual to possess cultural cognition, open and inclusive attitudes, practical communication skills, and critical cultural awareness in intercultural contexts, so as to properly handle communication conflicts between different cultures and accomplish communicative tasks in professional settings. Domestic scholars have already realized that intercultural communicative competence in the vocational undergraduate context should develop in synergy with cultural identity and vocational competence on the job. Some studies have constructed a trinity cultivation framework of "language–culture–profession" and attempted to implement teaching reforms through means such as integration of posts, courses, competitions, and certificates, virtual simulation, and dual mentorship from both schools and enterprises. However, most existing studies conduct macroscopic discussions at the national level, and relatively few have carried out empirical investigations grounded in the unique industrial ecosystem of the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area. At the international level, research on intercultural communicative competence in the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has continued to grow, and Byram's five-dimensional model has been widely used. However, foreign studies mostly target overseas higher vocational institutions and are not fully applicable to China's unique vocational undergraduate education type.

In summary, this study proposes three core research questions: first, what is the current status of the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence in College English courses at vocational undergraduate universities in the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area; second, what are the core practical dilemmas faced during the implementation of frontline teaching; and third, how can we construct a cultivation pathway for intercultural communicative competence that aligns with the industrial talent needs of the Greater Bay Area. Through teacher questionnaire surveys, this study obtains first-hand teaching practice data, analyzes the practical contradictions, and proposes feasible reform pathways, so as to fill the regional empirical gap in existing research and provide practical references for the reform of College English teaching in vocational undergraduate universities in the Greater Bay Area.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Domestic Research on the Cultivation of Intercultural Communicative Competence in Vocational Undergraduate Education

Domestic scholars have conducted research on the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence in College English within vocational undergraduate education mainly from three dimensions: cultivation positioning, practical dilemmas, and implementation pathways. At the level of cultivation positioning, researchers generally agree that intercultural communicative education in vocational undergraduate institutions has transcended the traditional scope of foreign language knowledge instruction. Guan Jun (2026) points out that the synergistic cultivation of students' intercultural communicative competence and cultural identity is the core key to enhancing the overall competence of vocational undergraduate students. Wu Yaru (2026), based on the application-oriented positioning of vocational undergraduate education, constructs a trinity cultivation framework of "language–culture–profession," emphasizing that language foundation, cultural understanding, and professional workplace application are inseparable. Liu Silu (2025), grounded in the actual demands of cross-border industrial positions, proposes that intercultural communicative competence is a core employability element for vocational undergraduate students to adapt to international-facing posts, and that intercultural literacy ultimately needs to be implemented in professional work scenarios.

In terms of dilemma diagnosis, Liu Shasha and Qi Lili (2026) point out that there is a general imbalance in the positioning of intercultural teaching objectives in vocational undergraduate English classrooms, where intercultural content is mostly attached to language knowledge points and lacks independent and systematic instructional design. Liang Binbin (2025), through empirical research, confirms that monotonous teaching resources and rigid teaching methods are the core factors constraining the improvement of intercultural teaching quality, and that most existing teaching materials consist of general Chinese and foreign cultural content, with a notable scarcity of practical

teaching resources tailored to professional positions. Wu Yaru (2026) further specifies the unique faculty predicament in vocational undergraduate institutions: most English teachers possess solid language teaching abilities but lack frontline industry practical experience, making it difficult to achieve deep integration of intercultural content with professional work scenarios.

In terms of cultivation pathway research, the academic community has produced diversified reform research outcomes. Wu Yaru (2026) advocates the integration of virtual simulation technology into classroom teaching while simultaneously promoting the school-enterprise dual mentorship system, so as to break down the barriers between vocational education and industrial development. Liu Shasha and Qi Lili (2026) construct systematic optimization strategies for cultivating intercultural communicative competence from four dimensions: teaching content, teaching methods, teacher development, and assessment and evaluation. Liu Silu (2025), through teaching experiments, verifies that the integration model of “posts, courses, competitions, and certificates” can significantly enhance students’ intercultural literacy and professional English application ability, with the experimental class showing markedly better cultivation outcomes than the control class. Based on the internationalization background of vocational education’s “going global,” Chen Liping et al. (2025) construct an international cultivation model for cross-cultural “new farmer” talents, providing a novel approach for the cultivation of intercultural talents in vocational undergraduate education.

Overall, domestic research has accumulated relatively rich theoretical and policy-oriented achievements, but most of the existing literature remains at the level of macroscopic strategic deduction, lacking systematic empirical investigations targeting the industrial environment and institutional characteristics of the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area, and empirical studies specifically on regional vocational undergraduate institutions are still relatively scarce.

2.2 International Research on Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Field of Vocational Education

International scholars abbreviate Intercultural Communicative Competence as ICC. In recent years, research on ICC in the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has continued to gain momentum. Yang et al. (2026) conducted a systematic scoping review of 40 core publications from 2005 to 2026 and found that quantitative studies and conceptual studies in this field have been increasing year by year; however, the overall research methodology is still in a preliminary stage of development, and the depth and standardization of empirical research still need to be improved.

At the theoretical framework level, Byram's (2020) five-dimensional model of intercultural communicative competence stands as the most authoritative and influential theoretical instrument in this field, encompassing five core dimensions: cultural knowledge, intercultural attitudes, communication skills, skills of interpreting and relating, and critical cultural awareness. This model has been widely applied in curriculum design and competence assessment across various countries' vocational education systems. Thongpan and Thumawongsa (2023) conducted an empirical comparative study with vocational education teachers in Thailand, and the results show that the overall ICC level of international teachers is significantly higher than that of local teachers; among the sample teachers, the best performance is observed in the dimension of "intercultural attitudes," while the weakest performance is found in "critical cultural awareness." The study also confirms that international travel and authentic intercultural contact experiences have a significantly positive effect on the enhancement of individuals' intercultural communicative competence.

At the level of policy implementation and translation, Liang and Ambotang (2025) conducted a specific assessment of vocational English classrooms in China, pointing out that although China's higher vocational English curriculum standards have explicitly incorporated the objective of cultivating intercultural communicative competence, there exists a noticeable gap between policy implementation and classroom practice, with core issues concentrating on the absence of specialized teacher training and the superficiality of intercultural thematic instruction in class. It is worth noting that most foreign empirical studies focus on ICC assessment in specific vocational fields such as nursing and engineering, and the subjects of these studies are mostly overseas polytechnics. Since vocational undergraduate education is a unique education type in China, the existing conclusions from foreign studies cannot be directly applied to domestic vocational undergraduate teaching contexts, and their localized adaptability still needs further verification.

2.3 Research Review

Synthesizing existing domestic and international studies, the academic community generally recognizes the significant value of intercultural communicative competence in vocational education and jointly advocates for a shift in intercultural teaching from "general humanistic literacy" to "professional application-oriented competence." However, existing studies present two obvious research gaps: domestic research lacks empirical investigations focused on the industrial and educational ecology of the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area, while foreign research has not conducted any specialized studies on China's vocational undergraduate education. To address this research gap, the present study conducts a questionnaire survey among vocational undergraduate institutions in the Greater Bay Area, analyzes the current teaching status, identifies practical dilemmas, and constructs cultivation pathways that are adapted to the regional industrial needs.

3. Research Design

3.1 Research Subjects

This study selects 25 College English teachers from a vocational undergraduate university in the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area as the survey sample. The distribution of teaching experience among the sample is as follows: 24% have 1-3 years, 24% have 4-6 years, 12% have 7-10 years, and 40% have over 10 years of teaching experience. The majority of the teachers (76%) teach non-English major undergraduates, while 24% simultaneously teach both non-English major and English major courses. The sample covers both young and experienced teachers, which can objectively reflect the actual practice of intercultural English teaching in vocational undergraduate universities in the Greater Bay Area.

3.2 Research Instrument

This study employs the "Questionnaire on the Current Status of Cultivating Intercultural Communicative Competence in College English (Teacher Version)" as the research instrument. The questionnaire consists of four major modules: (a) basic demographic information of teachers; (b) teaching content, textbook resources, and classroom implementation methods; (c) current status of course assessment and evaluation and existing difficulties in evaluation; and (d) obstacles and hindering factors faced in intercultural teaching practice. The questionnaire items include both single-choice and multiple-choice questions, and frontline teaching practice data are collected in response to the research questions.

3.3 Data Analysis Methods

After the questionnaire collection was completed, this study eliminated invalid questionnaires, resulting in a total of 25 valid responses. Descriptive statistical methods were then used to calculate the frequency and proportion of each option, so as to objectively present the current teaching practice of intercultural communicative competence in College English at vocational undergraduate universities in the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area.

4. Survey Results and Analysis of the Current Cultivation Status

4.1 Teachers' Current Perception of the Intercultural Needs of Industrial Talents in the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area

In response to the survey question "Do you understand the specific demands of the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area for talents' intercultural communicative competence?", the results show that only 8% of the teachers indicated that they understand it very well, 48% indicated that they understand it to some extent, 20% reported a moderate level of understanding, 24% indicated that they do not understand it well, and no teacher chose "do not understand it at all." In total, only 56% of the teachers reached the level of "understand it to some extent" or above. This finding indicates that nearly half of the teachers have insufficient knowledge of the real intercultural communication tasks involved in international-facing positions in the Greater Bay Area and of the competence standards for industrial talents, and that there exists an information barrier between the teacher group and the

regional industrial talent demands.

4.2 Current Status of the Setting of Intercultural Communicative Competence Teaching Objectives

In terms of the design of intercultural teaching objectives, only 36% of the teachers explicitly design teaching objectives for intercultural communicative competence in their courses; 60% of the teachers only occasionally incorporate intercultural content in their classroom instruction; and 4% of the teachers rarely address intercultural themes. No teacher indicated that they never touch upon intercultural teaching content. These data indicate that in the vast majority of classrooms, intercultural communication is treated as incidental teaching content rather than being independently included in the course objectives, and that intercultural teaching remains attached to the explanation of language knowledge points, lacking systematic instructional design.

4.3 Current Status of Textbooks and Teaching Content

The multiple-choice results regarding textbook content show that Western cultural introductions account for 88%, English expressions of Chinese culture account for 84%, and industry-specific English and intercultural communication account for 52%, while cases related to the Greater Bay Area industries or local culture account for only 8%. The existing textbook resources are predominantly composed of general Chinese and foreign cultural materials, severely lacking localized teaching cases that align with the industrial clusters in the Greater Bay Area, which constitutes a prominent shortcoming in the current teaching resources.

4.4 Current Status of Classroom Teaching Implementation Methods

The statistics on teaching methods show that the traditional lecture method accounts for 92% and remains the dominant teaching model in the classroom; situational simulation, project-based learning, and case analysis each account for 44%; classroom presentation and defense account for 52%; while intercultural role-playing, as a type of immersive experiential teaching, accounts for only 12%. It is evident that the classroom is still dominated by teacher-centered one-way knowledge delivery, and the use of experiential teaching methods that can create virtual intercultural conflicts and train practical communicative skills remains very low.

4.5 Current Status of the Implementation of Industry-Education Integration and Collaborative Teaching

Regarding the introduction of enterprise resources into the classroom, only 4% of teachers frequently introduce real enterprise cases or invite enterprise personnel to participate in teaching; 28% do so occasionally; 36% rarely do so; and 32% have never done so. In total, 68% of teachers rarely or never introduce industrial resources into English classrooms. Vocational undergraduate education emphasizes industry-education integration, but the implementation of industry-education collaboration in College English courses remains at a relatively low level, making it difficult for authentic intercultural communication scenarios from enterprises to enter regular classrooms.

4.6 Current Status of Course Assessment and Evaluation

Among the formative assessment items, attendance (100%), classroom performance (96%), after-class assignments (96%), quizzes (88%), and classroom presentations (88%) are the main assessment components, with the assessment items concentrating on language knowledge acquisition. When asked whether the current assessment methods can evaluate intercultural communicative competence, 0% of the teachers chose “very capable,” 36% chose “relatively capable,” 28% chose “average,” and 36% chose “not very capable.” In total, 64% of the teachers believe that the existing assessment system is insufficient to evaluate students’ intercultural communicative competence.

Further investigation into the difficulties in evaluation reveals, according to multiple-choice results, that the top five practical difficulties are: lack of authentic intercultural communication scenarios (92%), low student classroom participation (84%), teachers’ insufficient understanding of the Greater Bay Area industries (64%), lack of specialized evaluation tools (56%), and limited class hours (40%). At present, there is a shortage of assessment tools tailored to vocational undergraduate education for intercultural communicative competence, making it difficult to capture students’ core abilities such as

critical cultural awareness and intercultural negotiation and conflict resolution.

5. Practical Dilemmas in Cultivating English Intercultural Communicative Competence in Vocational Undergraduate Universities in the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area

Based on the literature review and questionnaire survey results, five major dilemmas exist in the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence in College English at vocational undergraduate institutions in the Greater Bay Area.

5.1 Over-generalized Teaching Objectives and Absence of Regional Industrial Job Orientation

Although policy documents have clearly set forth the requirements for cultivating intercultural communicative competence, at the level of curriculum syllabi, many institutions have not established independent teaching objectives for intercultural communication. Intercultural content remains attached to language knowledge points, with vague and general teaching goals that fail to align with the actual work tasks in cross-border e-commerce, advanced manufacturing, and international-facing service industries in the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area. The questionnaire reveals that more than half of the teachers have limited understanding of the intercultural needs of industrial talents in the Greater Bay Area, and instructional design lacks a job-oriented approach. There is also confusion between the cultivation of general humanistic literacy in regular undergraduate programs and the application-oriented intercultural competence required in vocational undergraduate education, with no clear distinction made between general cultural literacy and the specific intercultural communication tasks in professional work settings.

5.2 Imbalance in Teaching Resources and Insufficient Supply of Localized Industrial Teaching Materials

Existing textbook content emphasizes general Western cultural knowledge and general English expressions of Chinese culture, while materials on Greater Bay Area industrial scenarios, local Lingnan international-facing culture, and authentic intercultural conflict cases from Bay Area enterprises are severely insufficient. The updating of textbook resources lags behind, and there is a lack of loose-leaf and project-based supporting teaching materials. Teachers find it difficult to obtain localized teaching resources that are suitable for vocational undergraduate classrooms; most classroom cases are drawn from general foreign-language texts, which are disconnected from students' future job positions and make it hard to achieve the organic integration of "language, culture, and profession."

5.3 Rigid Teaching Models and Absence of Immersive Intercultural Practice Scenarios

Classroom instruction is still dominated by teacher-centered lectures, while experiential teaching methods such as situational simulation, intercultural role-playing, and project-based learning are used with low frequency. Intercultural communicative competence is a highly practice-oriented ability; relying solely on theoretical knowledge instruction cannot train students' practical skills in handling cultural conflicts and negotiating communication. Real classrooms lack authentic or simulated intercultural communication contexts. At the same time, the implementation of industry-education integration faces difficulties: enterprise international-facing scenarios are hard to bring into the classroom, off-campus practical channels are limited, and students lack opportunities to transform intercultural knowledge into communicative skills through practice.

5.4 Dual Competency Gaps in the Teaching Staff and the Need for Improved Dual-Qualified Teacher Competence

Vocational undergraduate English teachers are required to possess both theoretical literacy in intercultural communicative teaching and a sound understanding of regional industries as well as practical industry experience. The survey shows that 64% of the teachers acknowledge their insufficient knowledge of the industrial conditions in the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area. Most teachers have a solid background in linguistics but lack experience in enterprise secondment or industry placements, and thus have limited understanding of the real intercultural communication challenges in international-facing positions. Meanwhile, there is an insufficient supply of specialized training for vocational undergraduate teachers in intercultural communicative teaching,

and the implementation of the school-enterprise dual mentorship system in public English courses remains at a very low level, with few opportunities for external enterprise experts to participate in English teaching. These factors together constitute a gap in teacher competence.

5.5 Lag in the Construction of the Evaluation System and the Lack of Targeted Competence Assessment Tools

Current course assessments focus on attendance, written assignments, and language quizzes, with the primary emphasis on evaluating the mastery of language knowledge, and no assessment scales specifically tailored to vocational undergraduate education have been developed based on Byram's five-dimensional model of intercultural communicative competence. Higher-order abilities such as intercultural attitudes, critical cultural awareness, and conflict negotiation skills are difficult to capture through existing assessment items. Teachers generally report the absence of standardized evaluation tools and the lack of authentic communicative scenarios in the classroom, which results in high subjectivity and low operability in the evaluation of intercultural communicative competence, and makes it difficult for assessment outcomes to inform instructional improvement.

6. Optimization Pathways for Cultivating English Intercultural Communicative Competence in Vocational Undergraduate Universities in the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area

In response to the above practical dilemmas, and in consideration of the application-oriented positioning of vocational undergraduate education as well as the industrial development needs of the Greater Bay Area, this study, grounded in the trinity framework of “language-culture-profession,” proposes five optimization pathways.

6.1 Target the Job Demands of the Greater Bay Area and Restructure the Trinity Curriculum Teaching Objectives

Institutions should establish intercultural communicative competence as an independent teaching objective for College English courses and explicitly include it in curriculum standards and syllabi. With reference to Byram's five-dimensional model of intercultural communicative competence, and in alignment with the industrial job demands of the Greater Bay Area, the objectives should be decomposed into two major modules: general intercultural literacy and job-specific professional intercultural competence. On the one hand, institutions should cultivate students' multicultural cognition, inclusive attitudes, and critical cultural awareness, while strengthening their ability to express and disseminate Chinese culture to the outside world. On the other hand, they should align with typical positions in advanced manufacturing, cross-border e-commerce, and international-facing service industries in the Greater Bay Area, identify the high-frequency intercultural communication tasks in those positions, and specify the required abilities for students to handle business negotiations, international client communication, and intercultural conflict resolution. This approach will change the current marginal and subsidiary status of intercultural teaching and achieve the coordinated development of language, culture, and professional competence.

6.2 Build a Localized Intercultural Teaching Resource Pool for the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area

To break through the limitations of existing general textbooks, institutions should form a resource development team composed of English teachers and enterprise professionals engaged in international business. First, authentic intercultural communication cases from Greater Bay Area international-facing enterprises should be collected, and workplace communication conflicts and business negotiation cases should be developed into classroom teaching materials. Second, English narrative materials on Lingnan culture and the local industries of the Greater Bay Area should be supplemented, so as to also support the dissemination of Chinese culture to the outside world. Third, micro-lectures, loose-leaf handouts, and virtual simulation teaching resources should be developed to compensate for the shortage of localized content in traditional textbooks. Teachers should be encouraged to organize teaching around job-based projects, bring authentic industrial scenarios into the classroom, and thereby break down the barriers between teaching content and the realities of the Greater Bay Area industries.

6.3 Innovate Classroom Teaching Models and Create Immersive Intercultural Practice Teaching

Institutions should transform the traditional lecture-dominated classroom model and increase the proportion of experiential and task-based teaching. In the classroom, teachers should promote intercultural role-playing, situational simulation, and project-based learning (PBL), and design projects around authentic communicative tasks from Greater Bay Area enterprises. Virtual simulation technology should be fully utilized to construct virtual cross-border communication scenarios, so as to compensate for the shortage of authentic intercultural contexts. The integration of posts, courses, competitions, and certificates should be implemented in depth, and the intercultural tasks from vocational English skills competitions and vocational certificate examinations should be incorporated into daily teaching. Online international exchange channels should be expanded to create opportunities for online intercultural interaction. At the same time, industry-education integration should be promoted by inviting international-facing practitioners from Greater Bay Area enterprises to enter the classroom and share case studies, thereby broadening students' practical perspectives.

6.4 Improve the Dual-Qualified Teacher Development Mechanism and Promote the Implementation of the School-Enterprise Dual Mentorship System

For in-service teachers, two types of training should be provided: first, specialized training in intercultural communicative teaching theories, to help teachers master classic theoretical models such as Byram's; and second, short-term practical placements for English teachers in international-facing enterprises in the Greater Bay Area, so as to enhance their understanding of the intercultural demands of industrial positions and fill the gap in industrial cognition. The school-enterprise dual mentorship system should be improved by introducing external enterprise experts into College English classrooms to undertake case-based teaching and project guidance. A teaching community for vocational undergraduate English teachers in the Greater Bay Area should be established, with cross-institutional teaching and research activities organized to share intercultural teaching cases and improve teachers' overall teaching competence.

6.5 Construct a Multidimensional and Diversified Evaluation System and Develop Localized Assessment Tools

Based on Byram's five-dimensional model, an assessment scale for intercultural communicative competence tailored to vocational undergraduate education in the Greater Bay Area should be developed, so as to change the evaluation orientation that only assesses language knowledge. Process-oriented multiple evaluation should be implemented, incorporating performance in situational simulation, intercultural project outcomes, and classroom case discussions into formative assessment. The weight of paper-based tests should be reduced, while multidimensional performance in knowledge, attitudes, communication skills, and critical cultural awareness should be taken into account. The involvement of enterprise mentors in evaluation should be explored, so that students' intercultural communicative performance can be assessed from a workplace perspective. Through operable assessment tools, the goal of "promoting teaching through evaluation" can be achieved, using evaluation feedback to drive the optimization of instructional design in return.

7. Conclusion and Prospects

The opening-up environment of the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area imposes an urgent demand on the intercultural communicative competence of vocational undergraduate talents. Based on a questionnaire survey of 25 College English teachers from vocational undergraduate universities in the Greater Bay Area, this study finds that the current teaching of intercultural communicative competence in College English faces five major dilemmas: insufficient industry orientation of teaching objectives, scarcity of localized teaching resources, lack of immersive practice scenarios, dual competency gaps in the teaching staff, and absence of assessment tools. Accordingly, this paper proposes a complete set of practical pathways, including restructuring the trinity teaching objectives, developing a localized teaching resource pool for the Greater Bay Area, innovating immersive practical teaching models, strengthening the construction of dual-qualified teacher teams, and building a multidimensional and diversified evaluation system.

This study has limitations in terms of sample size, as the survey mainly relies on teacher questionnaires. Future research could expand the sample, incorporate student questionnaires, and

conduct action research to test the actual teaching effects of the proposed pathways. College English in vocational undergraduate universities should not be confined to the transmission of language knowledge; instead, it should actively align with the needs of regional industrial development, implement the cultivation of intercultural communicative competence in practice, and provide the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area with more high-level technical and skilled talents who possess foreign language ability, cultural literacy, and job competency.

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