

Reform and Practice of Integrating Regional Intangible Cultural Heritage into Junior High School English Curriculum under the Background of Smart Education

Dan Wang*, Yi Yang

College of Foreign Language Education and International Business, Baoding University, Baoding, China
Email: *dandan2006203@163.com

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Abstract

Under the context of smart education, how to highlight the advantages of English by using modern technologies, such as information technology to foster students' character development and cultivate their abilities, has become a key focus for junior high school English teachers. Meanwhile, as the core form of educational informatization, smart education—with its digital, networked, and intelligent technological features—provides technical support for integrating intangible cultural heritage into English curricula. Therefore, this paper focuses on two key terms: smart education and Baoding intangible culture heritage (ICH) and further clarifies the problems and challenges faced by traditional junior high school English teaching in the context of educational digitalization and then explores ways to integrate Baoding's ICH into junior high school English classrooms under the framework of smart education. The aims are integrating the ICH into daily learning and further encourage students to understand and enjoy the diversity of cultures and improve their sustainable abilities from social, cultural and environmental aspects (UNESCO, 2022). Meanwhile, it can also deepen students' understanding of Baoding ICH, promote local culture, enhance the effectiveness of junior high school English teaching, and explore more new teaching approaches with the integration of digital technology and English education in the fundamental level.

Keywords

Smart Education, Baoding ICH, Junior High School English Teaching

1. The Basic Information of Junior High School English Teaching in Baoding Area, Including Student Analysis, Usage of Textbook and Class Hour Allocation

For student analysis, the students in city and others in county bear more differences in Baoding area. First, their English learning ability varies a lot between the two regions. To be specific, junior high school students in urban generally have a relatively solid foundation and good oral expression skills. In contrast, students in county-level middle schools have a relatively weak foundation. With limited professional teaching resources, they take fewer listening and speaking exercises, and have insufficient vocabulary. Meanwhile, urban students have access to relatively abundant learning resources and tools, and can receive a variety of after-school tutoring. Compared with their county-level peers, they have more opportunities to be exposed to English materials and practice their language skills. In addition, parents of urban students generally attach greater importance to English learning and offer more support. They are often capable of providing some tutoring, cooperate with teachers' teaching requirements, and pay closer attention to their children's English academic performance and overall ability improvement. Therefore, the students in city often have better English performance than those living in county of Baoding.

About the textbook usage, the whole area in Baoding city adopts a unified textbook, namely the People's Education Press (PEP) English (Volume I and Volume II), supported by unified teacher's books and synchronized workbooks. However, the differences between urban and county-level schools are reflected in three aspects: supplementary teaching materials, digital resources, and small booklets. In a word, the schools in city bear more resources than those in the county.

In terms of class hour allocation, the whole city follows a unified curriculum standard. The basic weekly class hours are uniformly set at 4 to 5 periods, with each period lasting 45 minutes, and there is a fixed morning reading session for English. However, there are significant differences in extended class hours, after-school arrangements, and other English activities such as English speech contests and English poster making.

In view of the above situation, this study is carried out based on Tangxian Experimental Middle School in Baoding. Through teaching practice, it explores an implementation plan for integrating Baoding ICH into English teaching in county-level junior high schools by means of smart education, so as to provide a reference for English teaching in other county-level middle schools in Baoding area.

2. Existing Problems and Challenges of Junior High School English Teaching under the Background of Smart Education in Baoding

Traditional junior high school English teaching is facing prominent problems such as homogenized teaching content and methods, delayed feedback on stu-

dents' learning effects, insufficient opportunities for listening and speaking practice, and lack of personalized learning support, which are difficult to meet the diverse learning needs of students in the new era (Li & Zhang, 2024). In accordance with the requirements of Hebei Province's 14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural and Tourism Development to promote the development of ICH research study activities and the construction of related bases, the education department of Baoding, in collaboration with the ICH Protection Center, has initially constructed a research study framework of "ICH + English" and launched a variety of practical research study activities simultaneously. Meanwhile, local schools at the compulsory education stage have attached increasing importance to educational digitalization, and experts and scholars have conducted diverse and in-depth research on ICH education in the context of smart education. However, there are still many challenges faced by Baoding junior high school English teaching under the context of smart education.

Firstly, the inadequate researches have led to a lack of scientific guidance for teachers to integrate Baoding's ICH into junior high school English teaching. Currently, most domestic studies in relevant with the combination of intangible cultural heritage and English teaching focus on the macro-level and some of them concentrate on the combination of a few well-known intangible cultural heritage items (such as Peking Opera and paper-cutting) with high school or college English teaching. There are limited specialized studies on Baoding's regional intangible cultural heritage (such as Baoding Laodiao, Quyang stone carving, Anguo traditional Chinese medicine processing techniques, and Baiyangdian reed weaving). This gap in research leaves front-line English teachers in a state of blind exploration when attempting to integrate Baoding's ICH into the classroom. They lack clear theoretical guidance, systematic teaching design ideas, and mature teaching case references, making it difficult to achieve in-depth integration of intangible cultural heritage and English teaching.

Secondly, for classroom teaching practice, the penetration of Baoding's ICH into English teaching is seriously insufficient, and the content of junior high school English textbooks has not been fully explored. In real teaching practice, the majorities junior high school in Baoding area still emphasize on their teaching around traditional knowledge explanations (Zhang & Wang, 2026). On the one hand, most teachers have limited understanding and systematic knowledge of Baoding's ICH. They are insufficiently familiar with the historical origins, cultural connotations, and technical characteristics of intangible heritage projects, making it difficult to integrate intangible cultural heritage with English teaching content. On the other hand, existing research and teaching practices often fail to select the proper materials from Baoding's ICH based on the cognitive characteristics and English proficiency of first-year junior high school students. This has resulted in a disconnection between English teaching and Baoding's regional culture, preventing students from experiencing the charm of their hometown's cultural heritage during language learning. It also makes it difficult to achieve the dual teaching objectives

of “language proficiency + cultural confidence,” severely weakening the humanistic advantages of English education in junior high schools within the Baoding region.

At last, the application of smart technology remains limited, failing to effectively empower the whole process of teaching, learning and assessment, which is more severe in county level in Baoding area. Specifically, most classrooms still rely merely on PPT and multimedia presentations in junior high school. Some complicated smart teaching tools, such as VR/AR, AI-assisted oral English assessment, big data-based academic performance analysis, and intelligent homework grading are underutilized (Feng, 2026). In a word, technology is not sufficiently integrated with teaching, textbooks and culture.

Therefore, some ways or approaches will be illustrated below based on the problems mentioned above.

3. Ways or Paths to Integrate Baoding's ICH into Junior High School English Teaching

The research was conducted mainly in Grade 7 in Tangxian Experimental Middle School, which is located in one country of Baoding. And there are twenty-six classes of Grade 7 in total and fifty students each class on average. For each class, two English teaching periods every day and each period occupies forty-five minutes. One teacher will be responsible for two-class English teaching. Under this circumstance, the specific implementation path for integrating Baoding ICH into Grade 7 English courses will be discussed from two aspects: classroom teaching practice and extracurricular practice.

1) classroom teaching practice: constructing a situated and immersive learning scenario in accordance with the unit topic and language objectives.

Considering the subjects of this research are Grade 7 students of Tangxian Experimental Middle School in Baoding, the following contents will be carried out based on the English textbooks for Grade Seven (Volume 1/Volume 2) published by People's Education Press. The core unit themes include daily communication, campus life, food culture and traditional festivals, and the integration of ICH is closely tied to the linguistic points of each unit (e.g., plural nouns, the simple present tense, imperative sentences, simple comparative forms of adjectives). Therefore, a dual-track classroom featuring “language learning + cultural perception” is constructed by applying intelligent technologies. And this teaching practice will be achieved by the following three steps: the pre-class preview, the in-class implementation and off-class extension.

First, in the pre-class stage, some materials related with the unit contents will be played through digital technology tools such as the National Smart Education Platform for Primary and Secondary Schools (P&S) as the pre-class warming up to achieve the integration of textbook and digital tools (Wang & Li, 2025). Taking Unit 2 *We're Family* in Grade Seven Volume 1 as an example. Combined with the inheritance of Quyang stone carving craftsmanship in Baoding, the teacher can

release its bilingual graphic and textual introductions and interview micro-videos of its inheritors and their families through the “Textbook Synchronized Resources” section of the P&S. And some supporting vocabulary from the videos, such as carving (stone carving) and craftsman (artisan) will be summarized. Meanwhile, the teacher also offers the basic usages of the verb do such as “Do you know about your family? Yes, I do./No, I don’t”. It enables students to get familiar with the key language points of the unit in advance while being exposed to ICH. At the same time, smart technologies are gradually introduced to improve the accuracy of preview of the class, for example, students are required to submit their preview notes via the platform. Teachers conduct data analysis with the help of AI to identify some difficult vocabulary, such as proper nouns related to ICH. Based on students’ actual learning situations, teachers select the proper vocabulary to design targeted in-class teaching activities accordingly. Apart from that, teachers can also use generative AI to create relevant works to support teaching in the pre-class session. For instance, for Unit 1 *You and me* in Volume 1, teachers can generate an introductory video about inheritors of Baoding Laodiao (Baoding Local Opera), and play it as part of the pre-class introduction. The video features the inheritors’ brief self-introductions, a simple explanation of the ICH content and its unique significance. The video will be presented with bilingual Chinese and English subtitles to forge a direct connection between textbook content and Baoding’s ICH culture. About the design of preview tasks, it should take into account both basic learning and improvement. There are significant differences in English proficiency among junior high school students in the counties of Baoding. In the design of pre-class preview, attention is paid not only to basic preview of key language points in the textbook (such as vocabulary lookup and sentence pattern imitation), but also to the design of expansion tasks integrated with ICH (such as picture-text matching and simple expression), so as to meet the preview needs of students at different levels. Students with weak foundations can focus on tasks such as word lookup with AI dictionaries and reading aloud key sentence patterns to consolidate basic knowledge from the textbook. Students with relatively solid foundations can be involved in tasks including picture-text matching and simple sentence writing to achieve an initial improvement in language application ability.

Second, during the in-class teaching stage, smart tools, as a core carrier for ICH into junior high school English teaching, deeply bind cultural perception with English language application, and integrate Baoding ICH into the whole process of classroom teaching naturally. The teacher, with the help of VR/AR technology, can reconstruct the Baoding ICH-related scenes in accordance with the contents of each unit to realize the simultaneous development of “language application + cultural experience”. Take Unit 4 *Eat Well* in Volume 2 as an example. In-class teaching focuses on the core language objectives of ordering food scenarios and usage of countable and uncountable nouns. The production techniques of Baoding donkey burger, one of the Baoding local ICH, will be connected with abstract linguistic knowledge with the help of digital technologies. VR recreates the pro-

duction techniques of Baoding donkey burger. Students act as visitors and observe the process including dough kneading and donkey meat braising. In the immersive experience, they perceive the craftsmanship of ICH, and at the same time accumulate ICH-related food vocabulary such as flour, donkey meat, and green onions, laying a foundation for subsequent language application. After the VR experience, classroom teaching naturally moves to the practical application of key sentence patterns from the textbook. Teachers design interactive tasks based on AR technology to connect with the “food ordering” scenario in the textbook. Students are divided into groups to act as customers and donkey burger vendors, and carry out English dialogues using key textbook sentences such as What would you like...? I'd like a donkey burger. How much is it? This restores real-life food-ordering situations and strengthens students' ability to use sentence patterns. Meanwhile, teachers provide students with AR cards. When scanning the image of a donkey burger on the card, students can trigger the corresponding English introduction of ingredients, such as “It has flour, donkey meat and green onions”. Through interaction, students distinguish the usage of uncountable nouns (e.g. flour, meat) and countable nouns (e.g. green onions). In this way, Baoding ICH will become the important carrier for language practice instead of the additional content of class. It also enables students to feel the close connection between English and local life.

Meanwhile, interactive inquiry activities can be also carried out during classroom teaching. Through the visual display of digital whiteboards and the precise guidance of AI oral training, Baoding ICH can be combined with topics provided to design group inquiry activities, during which students are encouraged to describe the beauty of Baoding ICH with textbook vocabulary in cooperative exploration with correct language under the aid of smart tools. Take Unit 4 *My Favourite Subject* (Volume 1) as an example. The language objective of classroom teaching is to describe things with simple adjectives. With the help of smart tools, Tangxian bronze casting, a local intangible cultural heritage, is integrated into group inquiry activities. In classroom teaching, teachers first use digital whiteboards to display various excellent works of Tangxian bronze casting, including Buddha statues, figure sculptures, auspicious beasts and so on. Through pictures and short video clips, teachers introduce the historical origin and artistic characteristics of Tangxian bronze casting, enabling students to experience the artistic charm of local ICH and accumulate relevant vocabulary such as bronze casting and sculpture. After the presentation, teachers release group inquiry tasks via digital whiteboards. And students are guided to discuss the core question: “What is your favorite part of Tangxian bronze casting?” Students are required to describe their favorite bronze casting works and reasons with key adjectives from the textbook, such as beautiful, interesting, difficult and amazing, combined with the works shown on the digital whiteboard. At the same time, students will get more details of Tangxian bronze casting and deepen their understanding of Baoding ICH. When students present their expressions in groups, the AI oral training system

captures pronunciation and grammatical errors in real time, and timely provides suggestions to help students improve their English expressions. After group discussion, each group selects a representative to show their excellent expressions on the digital whiteboard. With the projection and annotation functions of the digital whiteboard, teachers give comments and organize class voting to select excellent group expressions to stimulating students' enthusiasm for participation.

In addition, through the combination of PPT and class groups, different forms of output can be realized. Take Unit 6 *Rain or Shine* (Volume 1) as an example. Classroom teaching focuses on the "the use of the present continuous tense and suggestion sentences". Smart tools integrate the concept of "four-season health preservation" of Anguo herbal cuisine into language output tasks. In class, teachers first explain weather-related vocabulary, the present continuous tense and suggestion sentences combined with the unit theme. Then, with the help of PPT, teachers show pictures of Anguo herbal cuisine and introduce its "four-season health preservation" concept to closely connect weather with Anguo herbal cuisine, helping students understand the health-preserving knowledge of local intangible cultural heritage and accumulate relevant vocabulary, such as herbal porridge and health preservation. Afterwards, teachers assign in-class language output tasks: students are required to make an English manual of weather based on the "four-season health preservation" concept of Anguo herbal cuisine. According to different weather conditions, students use the present continuous tense and suggestion sentences from the textbook to write corresponding English sentences, such as "It is cold today". We can eat herbal porridge. It is hot today. We can drink herbal tea. They match these sentences with pictures of Anguo herbal cuisine and present the manual in the form of PPT. After completing the manual, teachers organize students to display and communicate through class groups. The interactive display in class groups not only provides sufficient opportunities for students' language output and stimulates their sense of academic achievement, but also enables them to learn more about Anguo herbal cuisine and deepen their understanding of Baoding ICH.

In the after-class stage, different tasks, the basic and the enhanced, are assigned via the intelligent homework platform based on students' learning status and comprehensive English abilities. Basic tasks should be based on the exercise of the textbook and add some tasks related to the Baoding ICH materials. And the basic tasks must be provided with relatively low-difficulty such as ICH-themed writing, reading comprehension, dictation and multiple-choice questions on ICH-related vocabulary. However, the enhanced tasks are mainly designed to expand the application of textbook language points. This part, including the creation of a "Digital Cultural Inheritor" project and the production of short English animated videos about Baoding's legends with the help of AI tools, will be done based on students' own willing. Take Unit 3 *My School* (Volume 1) as an example. The core grammar point of this unit is the "there be" structure, focusing on the language objective of expressing locations. Teachers push a pre-made map of Baoding ICH

Street to through the smart homework platform. The map marks ICH-related shops, such as donkey burger shops and Quyang stone carving workshops. Students are required to use the “there be” sentence to label the locations of these ICH shops and complete simple sentence-writing tasks. While completing the homework, students not only consolidate the usage of the “there be” structure, but also learn about the layout of Baoding ICH Street and basic information about various ICH shops. Meanwhile, the smart homework platform supports automatic grading and error feedback. After students submit their work, the platform can quickly check basic mistakes in sentence patterns and grammar application, and mark weak knowledge points. In addition to sentence writing, basic assignments pushed by the smart homework platform also include various types, such as ICH-themed vocabulary dictation, multiple-choice questions, and simple reading exercises. For instance, after units related to “traditional crafts”, short ICH-themed reading passages, related to Quyang stone carving and Tangxian bronze casting, are assigned. Together with basic exercises such as multiple-choice questions and true-false questions, students can further learn basic knowledge about Baoding ICH while consolidating language skills.

Smart tools such as AI speech-to-text and AI animation production break the limitations of traditional after-class expansion and guide students to carry out creative and practical tasks around Baoding ICH with the help of language knowledge from textbook. Take Unit 7 *A Day to Remember* (Volume 2) as an example. The core grammar point of this unit is the simple past tense. Combined with this key grammar point, smart tools require students to record a short English video titled *My Intangible Cultural Heritage Study Tour* based on their own ICH-related experiences, such as visiting a donkey burger inheritance base or a Quyang stone carving workshop. In the video, students describe their study tour experiences using the simple past tense, such as “I went to the Quyang stone carving workshop last weekend. I watched the craftsmen carve stones and learned some simple carving skills.” After recording the video, students use the AI speech-to-text tool to convert spoken English in the video into written text. They then use the AI grammar optimization function to revise grammar and improve expressions, making their language more standard and fluent. Then, students combine the revised English text with ICH photos and screenshots taken during the study tour to produce a pictorial English newspaper, realizing diversified output of language and presentation.

In addition, smart tools also support some creative advanced assignments. For example, students are guided to use AI animation tools to produce short English animations based on Baoding folk legends. The animation scripts are required to use key vocabulary and sentence patterns from the textbook, with English dubbing. This not only extends the application of textbook language but also helps students deeply understand the cultural connotation behind Baoding ICH during creation. Meanwhile, the convenience of AI tools lowers the difficulty of creation and stimulates students’ enthusiasm.

2) Extracurricular practice: combining online practice and offline activities

Online practice mainly focuses on carrying out creative activities through digital tools to enrich textbook topics, and further realize interaction with students. Given the relatively simple equipment in county-level middle schools, the after-school online activities should be fragmented, interesting, and less difficult. Relying on commonly used tools such as WeChat, QQ groups, and some other free mini-apps, the extracurricular activities should be arranged in less than 30 minutes, which balance practical language use and the perception of ICH.

For example, the teacher can launch daily check-in activities for vocabulary, sentence patterns, and oral English off class to ask all students to finish. Teachers prepare in advance a basic vocabulary list of Baoding ICH adapted to the difficulty level of Grade 7, and upload a fixed number of words in the group every day, each accompanied by a picture of the ICH object, phonetic symbols, and textbook-related sentence patterns. Students are required to check in by reading the words aloud and writing one simple sentence. Teachers give random comments and select outstanding works weekly. Some other interesting creative activities are also accessible. Using free WeChat mini-apps, students select pictures of Baoding ICH to make emojis, and offer a simple English transcript to create exclusive ICH English emojis to share with the whole class. Meanwhile, group cooperation activities are mainly conducted through online group chats, where members will complete simple assignments, focusing on ICH English creation to cultivate team awareness and improve language application ability. During this process, teachers need to follow up on each group's progress and comment on the final results. For instance, students can write and perform short English scripts about ICH. Simple scenes are constructed around Baoding ICH culture, and groups are required to write some short English scripts with lines derived from textbook content. After completing the script, group members play different roles, record their voices using AI, and submit the final work to the class group. Teachers and other students comment from the perspectives of language accuracy and content innovation.

Compared with the online off-class activities, offline practice should be carried out in accordance with local conditions and the essential contents of text units (Zhao, 2025). County-level middle schools, based on their own characteristics and existing facilities such as classrooms, playgrounds, auditoriums, and local ICH resources, can design low-cost, low-threshold, easy-to-organize offline English activities about Baoding ICH that are well-adapted to textbook contents.

For example, low-cost English activities themed on Baoding ICH can be held on campus. Using the school playground and classroom corridors, experiential activities with simple equipment can be conducted without the support of external resources, such as handmade boards display and English fun competitions. A simple cultural corner can be set up in the corner of a classroom or a fixed area on campus, divided into different sections: a picture-text display area with bilingual posters introducing Baoding ICH, and an interactive practice area with English fill-in-the-blank exercises and sentence pattern matching activities. The content

is updated regularly to encourage students' independent participation. For example, low-cost ICH English-themed activities can be held on campus. Using the school playground and classroom corridors, experiential activities with simple props can be conducted without external resources, such as handmade display boards and English fun competitions. A simple cultural corner can be set up in the corner of a classroom or a fixed area on campus, divided into different sections: a picture-text display area with bilingual posters introducing Baoding ICH, and an interactive practice area with English fill-in-the-blank exercises and sentence pattern matching activities. The content is updated regularly to encourage students' independent participation. In addition, county-level middle schools can cooperate with local ICH authorities or county cultural centers to design some low-cost practical activities, allowing students to experience the cultural connotations (Tian & Wei, 2025). For instance, teachers can communicate with local ICH shops to organize small interviews. Students are required to prepare several simple English questions in advance, and other classmates will help to translate during the interview. They conduct on-site interviews at the shops, record simple answers in English, and then organize and share the results after returning to school. Alternatively, students can be organized to visit the county cultural center. With teachers' assistance, they prepare simple English commentaries for relevant ICH projects in advance. After practicing in groups, they give brief English introductions to classmates, parents, and even visitors in the exhibition areas.

4. The Application and Promotion in Teaching Practice

From July 2024 to October 2025, the team members carried out a two-semester teaching practice at Tangxian Experimental Middle School. There are 26 first-grade classes here, with an average of about 50 students per class. Each English teacher is responsible for teaching two classes every day, and two classes were selected for this teaching experiment. Teaching practice was conducted approximately twice a week, and it was conducted in regular classes in the form of various activities, which were closely connected with the thematic content of the textbooks.

1) Overall, the teaching practice of integrating Baoding ICH into the Grade 7 English curriculum with the aid of AI technology has progressed relatively smoothly at Tangxian Experimental Middle School. First, during the teaching process, relevant cultural content in the textbooks has been partially explored, and connections with local ICH have been established from multiple perspectives. Our team has tried to enrich school-based teaching materials during the real English teaching and deepen the themes of the textbooks. For example, taking "Ding Porcelain Culture" as the theme in Grade 7 English, we integrated the "Club Activities" unit in the textbook and designed tasks such as "Explanation of Ding Porcelain Craftsmanship" and "Interview with ICH Inheritors", helping students complete the writing of club introductions and process descriptions in English.

Second, relying on digital tools and platforms, new teaching scenarios for junior

high school English have been constructed, which has promoted the popularization of ICH to a certain extent and, on the other hand, enhanced teachers' smart teaching capabilities. At the same time, extracurricular activities have been innovated. With the help of smart technologies such as VR/AR and MR, Baoding ICH has been transformed into perceptible and operable English practice scenarios, enabling students to shift from being onlookers in learning to participants in ICH. For instance, students can use VR scenarios to complete the relevant steps of Quyang stone carving, including blanking and carving. The system pops up English terminology prompts simultaneously, and students record "My ICH Production Diary" in English after completing the operation.

Meanwhile, feedback from both students and teachers indicates that the program has achieved initial results. On the one hand, it has helped students consolidate their basic vocabulary, enabling them to learn a certain number of basic English words related to Baoding ICH, such as brick carving and date wine. Students can now use basic sentence patterns from the textbook to give simple introductions to production steps, which has deepened their understanding of local ICH. On the other hand, it has to some extent transformed teachers' English teaching concepts and increased the frequency of using the National Smart Education Platform. With the help of AI tools, teachers' lesson preparation efficiency has been improved, and their understanding of local ICH and awareness of integrating it into English teaching have been deepened as well.

2) Given that this project was implemented in Grade 7 classes at Tangxian Experimental Middle School in Baoding, its benefits have been extended to all 26 classes of Grade 7 and even to English teaching of the entire junior high school. Meanwhile, some of the contents have been adopted by other peer schools in the county-level, which has further promoted the research outcomes of this project. In addition, the implementation of the project has encouraged the use of national smart education resources and explored new ways to promote Baoding ICH. Meanwhile, the application of digital educational tools in teaching also provides a reference for other basic education reforms in the region, promoting the achievement of resource sharing and collaborative development.

5. Reflections and Directions for Future Improvement

Although the implementation and application of the current program have achieved certain progress and results, it faces many problems due to the constraints of objective factors such as county-level educational resources, student conditions, and the limit of teaching staff. To be specific, there is a serious shortage of qualified teachers. Local English teachers lack both systematic knowledge of ICH and proficiency in using smart tools. They can only rely on simple AI tools for teaching activities, and the application of tools mostly remains basic and simple. Besides, digital resources in county-level areas are relatively scarce, and resources related to ICH are even rarer. Most content needs to be independently produced by teachers, which is time-consuming and labor-intensive. And there

are limited ICH resources on the National Smart Education Platform, making it difficult to provide sufficient teaching support and meet the needs of regular teaching. Most importantly, insufficient class time and resource support also affect the implementation of the English teaching project. Class hours for English teaching in county-level junior high schools are limited, with most time spent on teaching language points. This restricts the in-depth exploration of textbook content. And the insufficient usage of internet also prevents the regular use of AI tools.

Based on the above problems, future efforts should be further improved from multiple dimensions, such as resources, teaching staff, mechanisms, in light of the actual situation and promotion needs of Baoding area, so as to promote the regular promotion of the implementation plan. And more measures can be taken from the following aspects:

Jointly build a digital resource library of Baoding ICH for English teaching. Relying on the National Smart Education Platform, multiple schools will cooperate with relevant ICH departments in Baoding to jointly develop an exclusive material library of Baoding ICH for junior high school English. Various forms, such as micro-lessons and real-scene photos of ICH will be adopted to realize resource sharing among all counties in Baoding and reduce the cost of teachers' lesson preparation.

Create conditions to launch teacher training. In view of the actual situations of English teachers in Baoding, training activities at different levels will be carried out, such as in-depth integrated English lesson design with ICH, creative application of AI tools, basic operation of the Smart Education Platform, and design of low-threshold ICH English activities. The local ICH inheritors can also be invited to participate in the training to explain the cultural connotations of ICH.

Design a graded implementation plan. For junior high schools in different counties, implementation plans bearing different carry-out demands will be designed to clarify the teaching objectives, smart tools, activity forms and evaluation requirements of each level, so that all schools can launch the plans based on their own situations.

Establish a teaching research incentive and guarantee mechanism. The integrated teaching of ICH and English should be included into the teaching research assessment of junior high school English teachers, and special teaching research awards and funds will be set up to drive teachers' enthusiasm and participation.

6. Conclusions

Education is an important carrier of cultural inheritance, and language is the core bridge for cross-cultural communication. Against the backdrop of smart education, integrating Baoding ICH into the junior high school English curriculum is not only a way to cherish and inherit Baoding ICH, but also an innovative exploration for junior high school English teaching to "take root locally and empower growth".

The implementation and improvement of the program cannot be achieved without teachers' teaching innovation, and even more so without students' active participation. Looking ahead, with the gradual advancement of the improved plan, smart technology will truly empower junior high school English teaching, making junior high school English classrooms a nurturing ground for "telling Baoding's stories well in English."

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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