

Investigating EFL Students' Civic Consciousness

-- A case study of ZYU

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Abstract: Civic consciousness serves as a pivotal impetus for societal advancement and development, embodying individuals' cognition, attitudes, and sense of responsibility across social, political, economic, and cultural domains. Contemporary college students, as the forthcoming leaders of society, constitute a vital segment of Chinese citizenship and play crucial roles as participants and stewards in national political development and social construction. Their civic consciousness directly impacts the construction of material, spiritual, and political civilization within China. Educating EFL students on civic consciousness is instrumental in fostering accurate ideological concepts, empowering them to fulfill their duties as social citizens, igniting creativity and intellectual curiosity, enhancing comprehensive cultural literacy and cross-cultural communication awareness, nurturing critical thinking skills, and enabling students to internalize civic virtues as their behavioral norms through natural infiltration, thereby establishing a foundation for their future roles as global citizens and contributing to sustainable development. However, the civic consciousness of EFL students is confronted with significant challenges due to the interplay of international and domestic factors. Notable issues include a deficient awareness of the rule of law and an inadequate understanding of rights. This study initiates with the concept and significance of civic consciousness, elucidating its definition, connotation, and importance within college education. Through questionnaire surveys and interviews, the current state of civic consciousness among students in ZYU (Zhejiang Yuexiu University) is analyzed, identifying prevailing problems and challenges. Subsequently, effective countermeasures within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning are proposed to address these concerns.

Keywords: Civic Consciousness; Problem; Countermeasure.

1. Introduction

Civic consciousness among EFL students represents a form of self-awareness that delineates the legal rights and obligations accorded to them in their political lives. It encompasses national identity, awareness of rights and obligations, adherence to the rule of law, fairness and justice, democracy and freedom, as well as social morality. As the future of the country and the hope of the nation, the civic consciousness of EFL students holds profound implications. This consciousness not only influences the enhancement of personal moral character and legal cultivation but also impacts the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, the efficacy of China's democratic political construction, and the attainment of the goals and tasks associated with building socialism with Chinese characteristics.

Presently, the overall state of civic consciousness among EFL students is exhibiting a positive trend. For instance, they demonstrate a strong sense of patriotism, robust national consciousness, and democratic awareness. However, under the influence of globalization and the driving forces of domestic market economy interests, certain unsatisfactory aspects of their civic consciousness have emerged, such as a lack of social responsibility, a weak sense of obligation, inadequate legal awareness, and a diminished sense of public morality among some students. Consequently, the objective of this paper is to analyze the underlying reasons for these issues in EFL students' civic consciousness and to explore strategies for its enhancement. The study of civic consciousness among EFL students carries significant theoretical and practical importance.

Theoretically, it enriches the framework of ideological and political education in universities. By examining this issue, we aim to help EFL students clarify their rights and obligations, enhance their understanding of democratic freedom, fairness, justice, and social ethics. Ideological and political education in universities serves as a crucial platform for cultivating and enhancing the civic consciousness of EFL students. Therefore, studying civic consciousness among EFL students augments the content of ideological and political education and refines its theoretical foundations. Moreover, it enriches the theory of talent cultivation and provides a theoretical reference for talent development.

Practically, studying civic consciousness among EFL students is beneficial for enhancing their sense of social responsibility. It enables them to fully recognize their prominent role in national social and political life, understand their own power, and clarify their responsibilities and obligations. This fosters a clear political stance, political views, firm ideals and beliefs, deep patriotism, good moral behavior habits, and a strong sense of responsibility and mission towards the country. Consequently, students will be adept at managing their relationships with the nation and society, particularly when personal and national interests conflict.

Furthermore, studying civic consciousness is advantageous for EFL students in enhancing their awareness of rights, which entails their ability to comprehend the law and have a clear understanding of the legitimacy of their rights. This involves the awareness of correctly claiming and exercising their own rights within the legal framework. Due to a lack of understanding of their rights, students may often misuse them

and fail to utilize them for self-protection when their rights are violated. Enhancing the civic consciousness of EFL students enables them to gain a clearer understanding of the basic rights and freedoms protected by the law, as granted by the constitution. Thus, they can legally exercise their political rights, actively participate in political activities, and embody the educational concept of integrating theory and practice. This equips EFL students to become qualified citizens who promote the process of national democratization in accordance with the new requirements of the economic development stage, and advocate for freedom, democracy, equality, and law, which align with the core socialist values.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of Civic Consciousness

The concept of civic consciousness originated from Western society, emphasizing the rights and responsibilities of individuals in society, including their understanding, attitude, and sense of responsibility towards society. With the development of capitalist society, some modern scholars, such as Almond, interpreted civic consciousness as belonging to political culture. Tsiklauri(2016) explored the sources of civic consciousness. Bilgin(2004) believed that civil society had developed with the development of Western democracy, but existing institutional deficiencies had hindered the development of civil society. In addition, the West has formed four representative theories for the study of civic consciousness: moral cognitive development theory, political and social learning theory, caring and understanding theory, and value clarification theory. Marx and Engels argued in the *Communist Manifesto* that people in the future society are fully and freely developed. As long as the people realize that the future is an equal, harmonious, civilized, and prosperous society, they can achieve it through hard work; In addition, they emphasize the importance of education and believe that the task of education is to cultivate the necessary talents, which has a significant driving force for social development.

The cultivation of civic awareness among college students has always been a focus of attention in contemporary foreign countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Singapore, etc., placing civic education in an important position. Kovalchuk(2015) targeted young people in the United States, specifically stating the content of the civic education curriculum system. He believed that the United States mainly conducted civic education through four methods, and analyzed the problems and reasons of current civic education. Based on this, he put forward suggestions. Xu et al.(2021) took college students as an example, discusses in detail the characteristics of college students, and analyzes the role of civic education on college students themselves and society.

Guo(2012) stated that civic consciousness was a form of social consciousness, a degree of understanding among citizens of their status and role in the country, and a form of public consciousness formed under modern rule of law; The focus of college students' civic awareness was to cultivate their identification with their own identity, and also to actively protect and exercise their rights and obligations. The core of education was that college students should consciously and actively love the country, uphold the law, and bear civic responsibilities. Tan(2015) stated that the civic consciousness of college students was the sum of three consciousnesses: identity consciousness, which reflected their sense of

belonging to the country and nation; subject consciousness, which reflected their perception of the status of masters as members of the National Council; relationship consciousness, reflected in their understanding and grasp of the relationship between citizens, and the country. Guo (2021) pointed out that civic awareness among college students referred to their conscious and autonomous understanding of social responsibility and self positioning. Li(2021) believed that the civic consciousness of college students was the first and foremost national consciousness, a psychological state of high loyalty to the country. Secondly, it was a legal consciousness. Thirdly, it was a subjective consciousness, the identification and perception of their identity as masters in the country. Finally, it was a sense of public morality, which is the understanding of choosing public moral behavior based on certain public moral norms.

Based on the researches above, it can be found that foreign scholars attach great importance to civic awareness and the education of civic awareness among college students, and are increasingly emphasizing the positive impact of cultivating civic awareness among college students. In the context of China, civic awareness places greater emphasis on a sense of responsibility and participation in the country and society.

2.2. Research on the Problems of Civic Awareness among College Students

Xiong(2020) clarified in his research on the cultivation of civic awareness among contemporary college students in China that college students generally had errors in their understanding of patriotism and political theory, neglecting the relationship between patriotism and political views; the vast majority of college students lacked a deep understanding of the constitution and had low enthusiasm for participating in activities such as legal knowledge lectures; there was a bias in their recognition of identity and rights and responsibilities, and a serious misunderstanding of citizen identity recognition among college students, with a disconnect between citizen consciousness and behavior; there was a gap between innovation consciousness and innovation ability; College students were acutely aware of the important role of innovation in a country and nation, but they chose to refuse when they needed to participate in innovation ability activities. Xu(2021) believed that college students generally had a strong sense of patriotism but lack national awareness; college students seriously lacked a sense of social responsibility, and their concepts of rights and obligations were imbalanced; their knowledge and behavior inconsistent, and although they have received education since childhood, they still engaged themselves in unethical behavior that damaged the environment.

2.3. Research on the Reasons for the Problems of Civic Awareness among College Students

Based on the analysis and research of scholars, it has been found that the main reasons for the problems in college students' civic awareness are internal factors

In terms of external factors, Liu(2019) proposed that college students lacked a systematic civic education, and fragmented civic education was submerged in a large amount of ideological education, political education, moral education, and legal knowledge education, failing to achieve the effect of civic education. The Party and government did not attach the same importance to civic education as ideological and

political education. There were differences in the level of emphasis and focus of civic awareness education and ideological and political education for college students in universities

Qian(2022) stated in his research on civic awareness education for college students from the perspective of online politics: The civic awareness education system was not yet mature enough, lacking in-depth theoretical research on civic awareness education; the norms of civic awareness education were not sound, lacking behavioral norms, content norms, educational methods and methods; and finally, there was a lack of good cultural genes and social atmosphere, mainly because China had lacked the concept of civic since ancient times due to the feudal system In the exploration of cultivating contemporary college students' civic awareness. It was proposed that the small-scale peasant economy and the consciousness of the subjects were deeply rooted, and the form of economy characterized by self-sufficiency was difficult to form the concepts of justice, fairness, rights, freedom, justice, and democracy. Schools and families did not provide a good atmosphere for cultivating college students, and schools only provided exam oriented education. Parents had insufficient understanding of civic consciousness, resulting in the wrong information conveyed to students that lacked democratic consciousness. The development of universities was related to the cultivation of civic consciousness The intensity of social practice activities were insufficient, and a series of group activities and self-service services launched by the government targeting college students had not received response and attention from universities.

According to previous research, college students generally have a high level of civic awareness, high attention to social issues, and strong enthusiasm for participating in social activities. However, some studies have also pointed out that some college students tend to evade and shirk their social responsibilities.

In summary, domestic and foreign scholars have gradually deepened and expanded their research on cultivating college students' civic awareness, and have achieved gratifying results. Domestic scholars have achieved certain theoretical results in the study of civic awareness education for college students, enriching and expanding the research perspective on enhancing the civic awareness of college students. However, it should also be noted that there are still shortcomings in the current research on civic awareness education among college students by scholars. Firstly, there is an excessive focus on theoretical research and a lack of concrete operational paths. Secondly, there is a lack of research on the principles and methods to enhance the civic awareness of college students. The research on civic awareness in foreign countries has been conducted earlier, with a high degree of emphasis, and has achieved good results in this field. Especially, a special and in-depth exploration has been conducted on the cultivation goals of civic awareness, which has played an extremely important reference significance for China's research on the civic awareness of college students. However, there are also shortcomings, such as a lack of research on the improvement of civic awareness among EFL students, a special group. Therefore, we still need to conduct in-depth research on the improvement of civic awareness among EFL students.

3. Methods

3.1. Participants

The study recruited a convenience sample of 240 EFL students newly enrolled at ZYU during the academic year 2023-2024 in the school of applied foreign languages in Zhejiang Yuexiu University. 24 students were excluded due to their withdrawal or mischievous answers. A final sample included 216 student. Among them there were 138 female students and 78 male students majoring in Japanese(n=50), French(n=43), Spanish(n=41) and business management(n=72). All the participants have just stepped into adulthood as a legal citizen and have to learn English as the foreign language for two years.

3.2. Instruments

3.2.1. Questionnaire

This study employs the self-administered questionnaire titled "Measurement of Civic consciousness among EFL Students" as the main survey instrument. The main body of the questionnaire consists of a Civic Consciousness Measurement Scale, which adopts a two-factor dimensional structure from existing research, dividing civic awareness into civic identity consciousness and citizen qualification consciousness. Secondary indicators totaling 14 aspects are set under the corresponding dimension.

3.2.2. Semi-structured interviews

To make up for the fact that the questionnaire would be insufficient and 12 students were asked to have semi-structured interviews in addition to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the current level of civic consciousness among EFL students. They were interviewed respectively for 30 min. The interviews were conducted in Chinese and audio-recorded for the reliability validity.

3.3. Data Collection

At the beginning of the semester, soon after the registration, all participants were invited to finish a questionnaire through the app WJX in the classroom setting. After the questionnaire, 12 students were invited to carry out a 30-min semi-structured interview. These students were chosen based on the results of the descriptive analysis and asked about the understanding of the civic consciousness and the education they had before and the expectation on campus, especially in EFL classrooms.

3.4. Data Analysis

Before the data analysis, data screening and cleaning were done. After the questionnaire was finished, participants' responses were checked for the assumptions of normality, and homogeneity of the controlled data for analysis and no violation was found. Then the questionnaire data was entered into the calculation computer for statistical analysis. Sorted and encoded, the data collected from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the overall levels of civic consciousness among the participants.

In this study, qualitative data were analyzed with Nvivo 12. Thematic analysis was conducted to indicate factors that account for student's basic understanding and expectation about the civic consciousness education.

4. Results

4.1. Civic Identity Consciousness

In the survey targeting college students' general

understanding of the concept of civic identity consciousness, Table 1 reveals that a significant portion of EFL students, accounting for 57.8%, expressed uncertainty about their understanding of the basic concepts of civic identity consciousness. This indicates a need for further education and clarification on the topic. Approximately one-third of the students (14.8% strongly agree and 17.6% agree) demonstrated a positive understanding of civic identity consciousness, suggesting that some students have a good grasp of the concept. A small minority, constituting 5.6% who disagree and 4.2% who strongly disagree, showed a lack of understanding or disagreement with the concept of civic identity consciousness. This highlights the importance of addressing potential misconceptions or gaps in knowledge among these students.

Qualitative data revealed

Overall, the data reveals a mixed level of understanding among EFL students regarding the basic concepts of civic consciousness, with a majority expressing uncertainty and a need for further instruction.

Table 1. General understanding of civic identity consciousness(N=216)

	Strongly agree	Agree	uncertain	disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
No.	32	38	125	12	9	216
%	14.8%	17.6%	57.8%	5.6%	4.2%	100%

4.2. Citizen Qualification Consciousness

4.2.1. Political Consciousness

The survey data, summarized in the table 2, indicates the number of EFL students who expressed interest in each aspect of political consciousness, along with the corresponding percentage and rank.

The data shows that social justice is the most popular aspect of political consciousness among EFL students, with 63.9% of respondents expressing interest. This indicates a strong awareness and concern for social issues among the students. Civic engagement ranks second, with 16.2% of students indicating interest. While this is significantly lower than the interest in social justice, it still suggests a notable level of engagement among EFL students in civic activities. Political issues rank third, with 12.5% of students expressing interest. This indicates that while political issues are not as popular as social justice or civic engagement, they still hold some significance for a portion of EFL students. Political systems rank last, with only 7.4% of students expressing interest. This suggests that EFL students may have limited knowledge or interest in the workings of political systems.

The data reveals a clear preference among EFL students for social justice and civic engagement over political issues and political systems. This may be due to a variety of factors, including personal interests, cultural backgrounds, and educational experiences.

Discussions and activities related to political consciousness could be integrated into the EFL curriculum, particularly focusing on social justice and civic engagement. This will help students develop a deeper understanding of these topics and encourage them to engage in related activities.

Table 2. Concerns for political elements (N=216)

Political consciousness	No	%	Rank
Social justice	138	63.9%	1
Civic engagement	35	16.2%	2
Political issues	27	12.5%	3
Political systems	16	7.4%	4

4.2.2. Rights and Responsibility Consciousness

Table 3 presents the results of a survey regarding citizens' understanding of their basic rights and obligations. The survey was conducted among 216 respondents, and the responses were categorized into five levels of agreement: Strongly agree, Agree, Uncertain, Disagree, and Strongly disagree.

The majority of respondents (75%) indicated that they are uncertain about their understanding of basic rights and obligations. This suggests a significant lack of knowledge or clarity among citizens regarding their fundamental rights and responsibilities. Only a small percentage of respondents (2.8%) strongly agreed that they understand their basic rights and obligations. This indicates that there is a small group of individuals who are confident in their knowledge of these fundamental concepts. A moderate percentage of respondents (17.6%) agreed that they understand their basic rights and obligations. While this is higher than the strongly agree category, it still represents a relatively small portion of the overall sample. A small number of respondents (4.2%) disagreed that they understand their basic rights and obligations, and only one respondent (0.4%) strongly disagreed. This suggests that while most individuals may not be confident in their understanding, few actively dispute their knowledge.

The high percentage of uncertain respondents highlights the need for educational programs and awareness campaigns to enhance citizens' understanding of their basic rights and obligations. This could include workshops, seminars, online resources, and public information campaigns.

Table 3. Understanding of basic rights and obligations for citizens (N=216)

	Strongly agree	Agree	uncertain	disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
No.	6	38	162	9	1	216
%	2.8%	17.6%	75%	4.2%	0.4%	100%

In this section, the data collected from 216 respondents regarding their concerns for various rights and responsibilities, is outlined in Table 4. The table ranks these concerns based on the number of respondents who indicated each one, along with the corresponding percentage of the total sample and their respective ranks.

The data reveals a clear hierarchy of concerns among the respondents. Equal rights were identified as the primary concern by a significant portion of the respondents, accounting for over 30% of the total sample. This finding underscores the importance of equality in the respondents' perceptions and prioritizations, indicating a strong desire for fairness and equity. Freedom rights were the second most frequently mentioned concern, with approximately 22% of the respondents highlighting their importance. This suggests that personal liberties and freedoms are highly valued by a substantial portion of the sample, reflecting a commitment to

individual autonomy. Responsibility for active participation was ranked third, with nearly 19% of the respondents indicating its significance. This finding indicates that a considerable number of respondents recognize the importance of active engagement and participation in societal and community affairs, emphasizing a sense of collective responsibility. Personal responsibility was identified as a concern by just over 16% of the respondents, placing it in the fourth position. This suggests that while individual accountability is valued, it may be less of a priority compared to the other concerns listed. Social responsibility was the least frequently mentioned concern, with only 11% of the respondents indicating its importance. Although it still represents a concern for a portion of the sample, it appears to be less prominent than the other rights and responsibilities listed in the table.

The data presented in Table 4 provides a comprehensive overview of the respondents' concerns for various rights and responsibilities. The findings reveal a clear pattern, with equal rights and freedom rights emerging as the most pressing concerns, followed by responsibility for active participation, personal responsibility, and social responsibility. These results offer valuable insights into the priorities and values of the sample group, highlighting the importance of equality, personal freedoms, and active participation in shaping their perceptions of rights and responsibilities.

Table 4. Concerns for rights and responsibilities(N=216)

Rights and responsibility	No	%	Rank
Equal rights	68	31.5%	1
Freedom rights	48	22.2%	2
Responsibility for active participation	41	19%	3
Personal responsibility	35	16.2%	4
Social responsibility	24	11.1%	5

4.2.3. International Awareness

Table 5 presents an analysis of concerns related to international awareness among a sample size of 216 respondents. The data is organized in descending order based on the percentage of respondents who indicated each concern, thereby providing a ranking of these concerns.

Tech and digital awareness emerges as the top concern among the respondents, with nearly two-fifths (40.7%) indicating its importance. This highlights the significance of technological literacy and digital competence in today's globalized world, where technology plays a pivotal role in facilitating international interactions and access to information. Cultural sensitivity is ranked second, with over one-fifth (23.6%) of the respondents expressing concern. This underscores the importance of understanding and respecting cultural differences in international settings, which is crucial for effective communication and avoiding cultural misunderstandings. Critical thinking, with 17.6% of the respondents mentioning it, ranks third. This indicates that a substantial portion of the respondents view the ability to analyze information critically and make sound judgments as a significant aspect of international awareness. Critical thinking skills are essential for navigating complex global issues and making informed decisions. Global issues, such as climate change, economic disparities, and political conflicts, are a concern for 12.5% of the respondents, placing this category fourth. This suggests that while a portion of the

respondents recognize the importance of understanding global challenges, it is not as prominent a concern as the top three categories. Intercultural communication skills, with only 5.6% of the respondents mentioning it, rank last among the concerns for international awareness. Although this indicates that it is the least prioritized concern in this sample, it still highlights the need for some individuals to develop effective communication strategies across different cultures, which is vital in international contexts.

In conclusion, Table 5 reveals a hierarchy of concerns related to international awareness among the respondents, with tech and digital awareness being the most prominent, followed by cultural sensitivity, critical thinking, global issues, and intercultural communication skills. These findings suggest that enhancing technological literacy, cultural understanding, and critical analysis are key areas of focus for fostering international awareness in the sampled population. To address these issues, it is necessary to strengthen international awareness education for EFL students, enhance their understanding and comprehension of the international situation, transnational culture, international cooperation, and international issues, and help them better adapt to the development and changes of the globalization era.

Table 5. Concerns for international awareness(N=216)

International awareness	No	%	Rank
Tech and digital awareness	88	40.7%	1
Cultural sensitivity	51	23.6%	2
Critical thinking	38	17.6%	3
Global issues	27	12.5%	4
Intercultural communication skill	12	5.6%	5

5. Discussion

5.1. Current State of Civic Consciousness for EFL Students

The study results showed that the civic consciousness of freshmen choosing English as the foreign language in ZYU generally had multiple weaknesses, and the civic consciousness had subjective limitations. The results indicate a mixed level of comprehension among the students, highlighting areas of strength and weakness that warrant further attention.

Firstly, there was a confusion about the civic identity consciousness among EFL students. This underscores the need for enhanced educational efforts to clarify and reinforce the understanding of civic identity consciousness among these students. The finding aligns with previous research emphasizing the importance of civic education in fostering a sense of belonging and responsibility towards society. The positive understanding demonstrated by approximately one-third of the students suggests that some students have already grasped the concept, potentially due to prior exposure or education on the topic. However, the small minority who disagree or strongly disagree with the concept highlights the necessity to address potential misconceptions or gaps in knowledge.

Regarding political consciousness (Table 2), the survey data revealed a clear preference among EFL students for social justice and civic engagement over political issues and political systems. This preference may stem from personal

interests, cultural backgrounds, and educational experiences. The high interest in social justice indicates a strong awareness and concern for social issues among the students, which was consistent with contemporary trends in youth activism and social responsibility. Incorporating discussions and activities related to political consciousness, particularly focusing on social justice and civic engagement, into the EFL curriculum could help students develop a deeper understanding of these topics and encourage their engagement in related activities.

The survey results on rights and responsibility consciousness (Table 3) indicated a significant lack of knowledge or clarity among students regarding their fundamental rights and responsibilities. The high percentage of uncertain respondents (75%) underscored the need for educational programs and awareness campaigns to enhance their understanding. This finding aligned with previous studies highlighting the importance of civic education in promoting awareness of citizens' rights and responsibilities. Such educational initiatives could include workshops, seminars, online resources, and public information campaigns tailored to the specific needs and interests of EFL students.

Furthermore, the data on concerns for various rights and responsibilities (Table 4) revealed a clear hierarchy of priorities among the respondents. Equal rights and freedom rights emerged as the most pressing concerns, followed by responsibility for active participation, personal responsibility, and social responsibility. These findings offered valuable insights into the values and priorities of the sample group, emphasizing the importance of equality, personal freedoms, and active participation. Addressing these concerns in educational programs could help foster a more comprehensive understanding of citizens' rights and responsibilities among EFL students.

Lastly, the analysis of concerns related to international awareness (Table 5) highlighted the significance of technological literacy and digital competence in today's globalized world. Tech and digital awareness emerged as the top concern among the respondents, followed by cultural sensitivity, critical thinking, global issues, and intercultural communication skills. These findings suggested that enhancing technological literacy, cultural understanding, and critical analysis are key areas of focus for fostering international awareness among EFL students. Strengthening international awareness education could help students better adapt to the development and changes of the globalization era, as well as enhance their understanding of the international situation, transnational culture, international cooperation, and international issues.

In conclusion, the survey findings presented in this study revealed a mixed level of understanding among EFL students regarding the various dimensions of civic identity consciousness. The results underscored the need for enhanced educational efforts to clarify and reinforce the understanding of civic identity consciousness, rights and responsibilities, political consciousness, and international awareness among these students. By addressing the identified areas of strength and weakness, educational programs and initiatives could be tailored to meet the specific needs and interests of EFL students, ultimately fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of civic identity consciousness and its importance in contemporary society.

5.2. Reasons for the Problems in Civic Awareness for EFL Students

The parenting system still exists in China today, with children being managed by their parents from childhood to adulthood. Parents often consider obedient children as good children. EFL students have not yet left campus, their economy is not completely independent, and they still rely on their parents. This makes parents accustomed to managing their children, controlling them, and making decisions for them, which makes it difficult for EFL students to have a clear sense of subjectivity and identity, become independent, and develop a civic consciousness that adapts to social development.

Due to market competition pressure, many EFL students feel confused and panicked about their future as soon as they enter school. In addition to learning their professional knowledge, they are also busy with various certificate exams aimed at laying a solid foundation for employment. This culture immerses EFL students in the social identity of learning and soon to be employed. They run around in this environment, ignoring the courses offered by the school, being indifferent to the cultivation of ideological and political education, and not realizing their responsibilities as citizens. The demand for talents in the social market is constantly increasing, and in most cases, it is required that experienced individuals or party members be given priority. If there are many qualified talents, various certificates, class cadres, practical experience, and study abroad qualifications will be used as criteria. However, society has not provided abundant practical opportunities for EFL students, and they are unable to discover their shortcomings from them. EFL students, in order to have an ideal career in the future, have a one-sided understanding of market competition and meet industry requirements through various means. They do not love to work in each industry out of interest, but demand themselves to be excellent enough for future development, with a clear utilitarian mind. As a result, EFL students spend most of their time on employment related events, seriously neglecting the cultivation of civic awareness.

Since the transformation of our country's society, it has been continuously opening up, new things have emerged, domestic and international exchanges have deepened, and the social environment is diverse and complex, greatly affecting the cultivation of civic consciousness among EFL students. Firstly, various negative ideas have emerged, and Western multicultural values continue to challenge socialist values. EFL students are in a period of value shaping. They are highly susceptible to the influence of these concepts and may even dissolve their political beliefs. Western values also affect the development of socialist democratic politics, causing EFL students to misinterpret the connotation of socialist democracy, demand extreme democracy, and in severe cases, affect national unity and national unity, moral decline, and social unrest, which poses great harm to the cultivation of civic consciousness among EFL students. Secondly, with the rapid development of socialist market economy, which promotes the diversification of social interest groups and affects socialist modernization construction, more and more citizens are participating in interest groups to meet their own needs. As citizens, EFL students are about to enter society, various interest groups make EFL students dizzy and utilitarian, hindering the cultivation of their civic consciousness. Thirdly, in the era of big data, there is a mix of

good and bad information, filling the social market. EFL students are the sensors of the times and are very skilled in operating the Internet. Whether it is obtaining learning materials or searching for information sources, they cannot do without the use of the Internet. However, the diversification of information leads to various harmful and false information flowing into it, interfering with the thinking and cognition of EFL students, and affecting their values. The concealment of the internet can lead to the irresponsible release of a lot of information, and many EFL students blindly believe and follow the trend without knowing the truth of the incident

5.3. Approaches to Civic Awareness Education for EFL Students

Civic awareness education for EFL students requires efforts and cooperation from various aspects, including schools, families, and society. Only through joint efforts can outstanding talents will be cultivated with a strong sense of social responsibility and civic consciousness. Here are several ways to strengthen the civic awareness education for EFL students.

Strengthen civic awareness education. Universities ought to integrate civic awareness education into their curriculum systems, systematically imparting knowledge and concepts of civic awareness through diverse classroom educations, particularly English courses tailored for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students. Concurrently, individuals from various sectors can be invited to deliver lectures at the university, thereby enhancing EFL students' comprehension and grasp of social issues. To adapt to the fostering of civic awareness among contemporary EFL students, universities must reform their teaching models and content. The paramount aspect remains harnessing the subjectivity of EFL students, transforming educational formats, and positioning them as the principal participants in teaching courses. Teachers need to consistently guide students to learn actively, participate eagerly, and acquire knowledge consciously, progressively augmenting their sense of responsibility and innovative capacity. Regarding teaching content, the emphasis on ideological and political education courses should be strengthened. Besides studying their specialized courses, ideological and theoretical education, along with value guidance, holds immense significance for EFL students. Presently, education constitutes a vital means for universities to cultivate civic awareness among EFL students. Hence, it is imperative to deepen their comprehension of such courses and guide them to form accurate values. The aim of learning is not to merely memorize knowledge but to comprehend what has been learned and the rationale behind it. The principal deficiency of current universities in this educational domain is permitting students to learn through a tedious process involving diverse content and a monolithic format, with assessments being merely superficial and failing to captivate students' attention, leading to suboptimal learning outcomes. To better foster civic consciousness among EFL students, it is crucial to enhance the educational content, systematically consolidate the teaching material, and empower students to organize practical activities under teachers' guidance. This approach enables them to apply the acquired knowledge, incorporate practical outcomes into subject assessments, stimulate students' attention, and foster learning based on theoretical understanding.

Provide more practical opportunities. Universities should provide more practical opportunities, such as participating in

some clubs, innovative projects, organizing social practice activities, volunteer services, community service activities, etc., so that EFL students have more opportunities to interact with society, understand social issues, and assume social responsibility. Universities should also provide internship opportunities and employment guidance for EFL students, establish a correct view of employment and career selection, alleviate their employment anxiety, and strengthen the cultivation of civic awareness among EFL students.

Guide EFL students to view civic awareness as a responsibility and obligation correctly through education and public services. Currently, there is extensive political, economic, and cultural exchange both domestically and internationally, with diverse Western values directly influencing EFL students. The university period is crucial for shaping the values of EFL students. It is essential to guide them to rationally view these diverse Western values, which is not only the task of universities but also the responsibility of society. Besides school education, pertinent government departments should intensify publicity in society, execute political guidance effectively, and enable EFL students to profoundly comprehend China's political and cultural values. This understanding should help them recognize the country's current development status and promote the fostering of civic awareness among EFL students. By contrasting the historical and social realities of China and Western countries and analyzing future development models, EFL students can learn to treat different cultural values correctly, enhance national confidence and pride in development, and actively participate in socialist modernization construction.

Establish a sound evaluation mechanism: universities should establish a sound evaluation mechanism to evaluate the civic awareness of EFL students, motivate those who excel in civic awareness, and also encourage those who still have room for improvement in civic awareness. Establish an evaluation institution: Establish a dedicated civic awareness education management committee, responsible for formulating civic awareness training plans, organizing the formulation and implementation of evaluation standards, and evaluating students' civic awareness. Develop evaluation criteria: based on the concept and connotation of civic consciousness, develop specific evaluation criteria, including civic knowledge, skills, attitudes, and other aspects. At the same time, it is necessary to clarify the scoring range and corresponding scores for each level. Adopt diversified evaluation methods: multiple evaluation methods are adopted, including comprehensive evaluation of student participation, performance, and social practice reports, to comprehensively evaluate the cultivation of student civic awareness. In addition, rating surveys can also be conducted through interviews, questionnaires, and other methods. Collaborate with social institutions: collaborate with social institutions such as communities and public welfare organizations to provide students with broader practical opportunities and evaluation platforms. At the same time, professionals from social institutions can be invited to participate in the formulation and evaluation process of evaluation standards. Establish a feedback mechanism: after the evaluation is completed, timely feedback should be provided to students, including evaluation results, strengths and weaknesses, so that students can understand their civic awareness status and make improvements. Establish a reward mechanism: establish awards for civic awareness to recognize outstanding students and groups in civic awareness cultivation, in order to

motivate more students to actively cultivate civic awareness.

6. Conclusion

In today's fiercely competitive nation, fostering civic awareness among EFL students has inevitably emerged as a focal point of societal concern. China, presently navigating a crucial phase of social transformation, possesses the conviction to uphold the socialist pathway and attain comprehensive prosperity. From the lens of political culture and ideology, nurturing civic consciousness among EFL students stands as a pivotal aspect of contemporary China's developmental endeavors. The objective of this study is to enrich pertinent theoretical frameworks and offer guidance for cultivating civic awareness among China's modern EFL students. This research endeavors to uncover the present state of EFL students' civic awareness through a combination of questionnaire surveys, literature reviews, and practical analyses. Building upon the actual circumstances, it delves into the underlying causes of issues in fostering civic awareness among EFL students and suggests avenues for its cultivation. The enhancement of EFL students' civic awareness necessitates a dual-pronged approach encompassing education and practice. Concurrently, corresponding improvement strategies are proposed, including reinforcing education on civic awareness, furnishing more practical opportunities, guiding EFL students to perceive civic awareness accurately, and establishing a robust evaluation mechanism. These strategies are poised to exert a positive influence on elevating the civic awareness of college EFL students. However, constrained by the author's limited knowledge, restricted data sources, and nascent problem-solving abilities, the research problems are largely summarized at a theoretical level, with inadequate empirical validation. In light of this research content, the author intends to sustain attention to this domain in future academic pursuits and personal life, aspiring to conduct in-depth investigations and propose practical strategies for the integration of civic consciousness education into English classes that genuinely address the issue.

Acknowledgments

This work is supported by 2024 Shaoxing Ideological and Political Special Project (No.JWJ00042) and 2024 Shaoxing Education Planning Project (No.SGJ2024027).

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