

# The Relationship between English Classroom and English Learning Burnout

Aiqin Wang<sup>\*1</sup>, Nianxin Ren<sup>2</sup>



**Citation** – ‘Aiqin Wang, Nianxin Ren’ “**The Relationship between English Classroom and English Learning Burnout**” ISIJ-International Journal of Social Science and Economics Invention, <http://isij.in/index.php>, Volume 04 Issue 01, January 2018, p. No. 01 of 09

DOI:10.23958/ijsssei/vol04-01/01

Published Date : 02-Jan-2018

<sup>\*1</sup>School of Foreign Languages, Anqing Normal University, 246133, China  
<sup>2</sup>School of Foreign Languages, Anqing Normal University, 246133, China

**\*Corresponding Author -**

**Aiqin Wang**  
School of Foreign Languages,  
Anqing Normal University,  
246133, China

Copyright © 2018 The Authors,  
some rights reserved;  
exclusive licensee ISIJ  
publication

ISSN : 2455-6289

## Abstract

This paper is to explore the potential relationship between classroom surroundings and English learning burnout among college students and aims to answer the following three questions: 1) What are students' perceptions of their college English classroom surroundings and what are the manifestations of their English learning burnout? 2) Is students' perception of college English classroom surroundings related to English learning burnout? 3) Does there exist any significant differences in each dimension of English learning burnout among students with high, medium and low perception of classroom surroundings? In order to answer the above questions, the author adopted questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations to collect data by investigating into non-English majors of Anqing Normal University in China. The data is then processed with the help of Excel and SPSS 20.0. The results indicate: 1) Students' perception of college English classroom surroundings and their English learning burnout are both at medium level; 2) There exists negative correlation between the perception of college English classroom surroundings and English learning burnout; 3) There exists significant difference in all the three dimensions of English learning burnout between high and low perception groups.

**Keywords:** English classroom; perception; English learning burnout; relationship

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Most students in China begin to learn English at a very young age, starting from primary school, even kindergarten. However, years of strenuous English learning doesn't necessarily produce successful English learners as expected. Instead, due to the lack of natural and native surroundings for English learning and various other reasons, a large number of students experience varying degrees of learning burnout, which not only frustrates English teachers and hinders the improvement of teaching quality but also poses threat to students' academic performance and their physical and mental health. This phenomenon is even more conspicuous among college students because they are less motivated to learn English than they were in senior high schools when they had to study hard at English so as to score high in their College Entrance Examinations. Under such circumstances, scholars have conducted numerous researches to explore the reasons of English learning burnout in colleges. But most of these studies are carried out from the perspective of demography which includes gender, grade, family-related factors, etc. and learners' internal factors such as personality traits, motivation, learning strategies and so on. Only a limited number of studies refer to the fact that external surroundings such as learning surroundings in schools and the society at large also exerts influence on students' learning burnout, but almost no empirical studies have been conducted to explore how and to what extent classroom surroundings affect learning burnout.

Although most studies have proved that individual factors determine the success of English learning, the external surroundings also influences the process and outcomes of English learning. After all, any form of second language acquisition is carried out in certain surroundings (Spolsky, 1989). For Chinese English learners, there are no such advantageous surroundings as native speakers have. Classroom is undoubtedly the main place where English learning takes place and classroom surroundings become the main external factor affecting the outcome of English learning. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the potential relationship between English learning burnout and classroom surroundings. Generally speaking, classroom surroundings are composed of physical surroundings, social surroundings and psychological surroundings (Fraser, 2012). However, physical surroundings are often affected by many objective factors and are difficult to control and change while social and psychology surroundings could be constructed by both teachers and students. Therefore, the classroom surroundings in the present study refer to the latter, that is, the teachers' and students' psychological perception of the class they belong to.

## 2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Theoretically, the present study verifies and enriches to a certain degree the relevant theories such as social interaction theory which includes constructivism and humanism, Lewin's dynamic field theory (1936) and Murray's Needs-Press theory (1938). Social interaction theory agrees with the proposition of constructivism and humanism that it is important to respect students' emotion and needs and meanwhile stresses the role that teaching process plays in students' learning. It also insisted that a person learns knowledge and develops himself in the interaction with others. For students, teachers are the best interaction object. (Williams, 2000). Classroom is the main place in which students and teachers interact with each other. So good classroom surroundings are very important for successful learning and teaching, thus teachers should play their instructive role and try to create a good learning surroundings for students. Lewin's dynamic field theory also insisted that any kind of human behavior is the results of the interaction between the person and the surroundings around him. Likewise, Murray hold the similar opinion. So as the main place where English learning takes place, classroom surroundings are quite important for the learning outcomes. The present study aims to testify these theories.

Practically, most previous studies about English learning burnout are limited to the examination of psychological factors and have seldom explored the reasons from the perspective of external surroundings. This study investigates the influence of classroom surroundings on students' English learning burnout, which offers a new perspective to account for English learning burnout. On the one hand, the findings of this study serve as a channel for teachers to get a general idea about students' assessment on their teaching as well as the manifestations of students' English learning burnout. On the other, it enables teachers to understand the relationship between classroom surroundings and students' English learning burnout, so that they can pay more attention to students' needs and improve their teaching approaches accordingly. From a macroscopic perspective, it can provide some evidence and guidance for the further reform of college English teaching.

## 3. LITERATUR REVIEW

Previous studies generally focus on such topics as the constitution and measurement, as well as the causes of learning burnout. As learning burnout is similar to job burnout with respect to various dimensions, the instruments used to measure it are developed on the basis of job burnout instruments. Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), devised by Maslach and Jackson (1981) to test job burnout, is the most influentially dominant theory model of burnout. Till now, the structure of various inventories used to measure learning burnout all referred to MBI or is mostly modified on its basis. Here are the three types of MBIs :

1. MBI-HSS (The Maslach Burnout Inventory-Human Services Survey). This is the original version, mainly used to test customers' burnout in the service industry.
2. MBI-Formed Ed. (MBI-Educators Survey). This one takes schools as researching background, whose structure is similar to the first one. The distinctions are

that the subjects are shifted from "customers" to "students" and the research background is shifted from working surroundings to "schools".

3. MBI-GS (MBI-General Survey). This model was designed for use with occupational groups other than human services and education, including those working in jobs such as customer service, maintenance, manufacturing, management and most other professions. In China, based on different research purposes, many researchers modified MBI for their own use and many of the instruments employed to measure students' English learning burnout are no different from those used for any other kind of learning burnout. Yang Huizhen (1998), a Taiwanese scholar, used MBI-GS (MBI-General Survey) to measure learning burnout and determined three dimensions of learning burnout: emotional exhaustion (a negative mood generated because of excessive effort in learning), depersonalization (a loss of personal identity; a feeling of being an anonymous cog in an impersonal social machine) and indifference (the reduced self-efficacy, a low evaluation for one's ability to learn).

Lian Rong et al (2005) believed that no interest in one's major is the most important factor that causes college students' learning burnout. And furthermore they developed CSLBI (College Students Learning Burnout Inventory), including emotional lowness, inappropriate behavior and feeling of low accomplishment, to measure students learning burnout. Up to now, this inventory has been the one that is employed most frequently. Some people worked out learning burnout scale among middle school students, which consists of four factors, namely emotional exhaustion, physiological exhaustion, decreased self-efficacy and aloof teacher-student relationship. This is the first inventory that was designed to measure English learning burnout. It covers three dimensions: exhaustion, cynicism and depersonalization. However, the statement of certain items is not suitable for non-English majors.

Since the time when the concept of "classroom surroundings" was proposed, researchers have been conducting numerous researches into it. At first, this topic was only researched abroad and the studies were all related to theories. After the 1980s, scholars in China began to explore the influence of classroom surroundings on teaching and learning based on the achievements made by overseas researchers. On the whole, relevant studies on classroom surroundings at home and abroad are generally centered around three aspects: research approaches, research instruments and correlation between classroom surroundings and other relevant factors.

## 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

After reviewing the relevant theories and studies abroad and at home, this chapter will focus on the research methodology which includes research questions, subjects, instruments, research procedures, data collection and data analysis.

### 4.1 Research questions

The present study aims to investigate the relationship between students' perception of classroom surroundings and

English learning burning out and answer the following three questions:

1. What are students' perceptions of their college English classroom surroundings and what are the manifestations of their English learning burnout?
2. Is students' perception of college English classroom surroundings related to English learning burnout? If yes, how?
3. Does there exist any significant differences in each dimension of English learning burnout among students with high, medium and low perception of classroom surroundings? If yes, What are they?

#### 4.2 Object of this study

The subjects of this study are 101 sophomores randomly chosen from two classes of non-English majors in Anqing Normal University in China. The two classes are both science and engineering majors. Altogether, there are 62 male students and 39 female students. Sophomores are chosen because on the one hand, English course is no longer offered for juniors and seniors who are non-English majors, and on the other hand, compared with the freshmen, they may have a more general and objective understanding about college English class after more than one year of English learning. Also, having get used to the teaching model, they are more likely to experience certain degrees of learning burnout.

#### 4.3 Instruments

In order to gather more reliable data and draw more convincing research results, three types of instruments are employed in this study. They are questionnaires: College English Classroom Surroundings Inventory (CECSI) and Foreign Language Learning Burnout Inventory (FLLBI), interviews and class observation.

#### 4.4 Questionnaires

##### 1) College English Classroom Surroundings Inventory

The author adopts the questionnaire named College English Classroom Surroundings Inventory (CECSI) to collect data about students' perceptions of their college English classroom surroundings. The inventory was developed by Sun Yunmei, a professor in Huazhong University of Science and Technology in China. It is designed by referring to the relevant inventories CES, QTI, WIHIC and CUCI which are developed by four foreign authoritative experts in the field of classroom surroundings. Considering the cultural difference between the west and east, some of the items are revised or adjusted to make them easily understood by Chinese students. The reliability and validity of the revised inventory have been proved, thus it has been employed in a lot of researches. The CECSI consists of nine dimensions and 55 items which concern both teachers' and students' factors. The participants are required to tick their answers for each item on the five-point scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). The description of the questionnaire is as follows:

**Table 1: Scale description and sample items in CECSI**

Scale	Description	Sample Item
Students Cohesiveness	The extent to which students know about, help and support each other	I help my classmates who need help in English class.
Teacher Support	The extent to which teacher help, trust and show interest to students	The teacher help me when I have trouble with the work.
Involvement	The extent to which students take active part in class discussion and other activities	I express my opinions during class discussion.
Task Orientation	The orientation that students acquire the English language by completing various linguistic tasks	I can complete the learning tasks that are assigned by my teacher.
Cooperation	The extent to which students cooperate rather than compete with each other to complete the learning tasks	I share my books and resources with my classmates when finishing assignments.
Equality	The extent to which the teacher treats every students equally	The teacher gives me as much help as the other students.
Student Responsibility	The extent to which students take responsibility for their own studies	I make plans and set goals for my study.
Teachers' Leadership	Teacher's ability to display his/her teaching ability, to control the teaching progress and show his/her authority in class	The teacher can explain the problems very clearly.
Teachers' Innovation	The extent to which teachers design novel class activities, adopting different teaching techniques and give various assignments	The teacher often tries different teaching methods according to different teaching content.

##### 2) Foreign Language Learning Burnout Inventory

Foreign Language Learning Burnout Inventory (FLLBI) is developed by Yang Tao in his doctoral dissertation in 2010. Altogether, it consists of three dimensions (exhaustion, cynicism and depersonalization) and 18 items. It has been proved that the questionnaire has good internal consistency,

reliability and structural validity. As it is a 6-point scale, there are six answers to each of the items which range from "never" to "very frequently" with the score ranging from 1 to 6. Of all the items, the scores of number 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11 item are counted on the contrary. The following is a detailed description of the inventory:

**Table 2: Scale description and sample items in FLLBI**

Scale	Description	Sample Item
Exhaustion	Excessive efforts put into English learning and emotional exhaustion	I feel sleepy during English class.
Cynicism	Negative and indifferent attitude towards English learning activities	I feel bored at the sight of English.
Depersonalization	Low evaluation on one's English learning efficiency, ability and sense of achievement	I always doubt whether I can learn English well.

#### 4.5 Class observation

Class observation is a qualitative method that is adopted just after the first questionnaire was sent out. The purpose is to solicit more detailed information that cannot be concluded from questionnaires. Altogether, the author observes 12 classes which last 3 weeks. During the observation, the author mainly paid attention to the phenomenon that are related to the nine dimensions of classroom surroundings and three dimensions of English learning burnout and wrote down all the related activities and phenomena that happened in the class. The purpose of class observation is to testify whether the results of the questionnaires agree with what is observed in the class so as to enhance the reliability of the research results.

#### 4.6 Interview

Interview is conducted a week after all the quantitative data were collected and processed, the purpose of which is similar to that of classroom observation, that is, to collect more information from students' perspective. Altogether six students were selected to participate in the interview according their perception of classroom surroundings. Two are with high perception of classroom surroundings, two with medium perception and the rest two are with low perception. They are chosen because on the one hand, they can represent the overall condition of students' perception of classroom surroundings more reliably, on the other hand, the author wants to know whether there exists difference in English learning burnout among these students. The selected subjects are interviewed one by one in the classroom after class. Each interview lasts about 10 to 20 minutes and the whole process of interviewing is kept secret. The content of the interview are concerned about both students' evaluation of English classroom surroundings and their English learning burnout. Moreover, all the interviews are fully recorded and transcribed afterwards.

### 5. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

On the whole, the process of the research can be divided into two stages: data collection and data analysis. However, data analysis is not conducted after all the data are collected. In fact, quantitative data is firstly collected and analyzed. Then qualitative data collection and analysis follow

to testify the quantitative research results. Firstly, in order to avoid the possibility that students may get tired of filling two questionnaires at one time, which might compromise the reliability of the data, the author firstly gives out the questionnaire named CECSI to know students' perception of their English classroom surroundings. Then one week later, the second questionnaire, FLLBI is handed out to gather data about these students' English learning burnout. Before start, the author gives clear explanation about the requirements and the purpose of the investigation. Altogether, 101 copies of each questionnaire are handed out and they are all recollected. Except the 5 copies that are filled in carelessly, the rest 96 copies are all valid.

Second, as soon as the two classes are chosen as research subjects, the author begin to conduct classroom observation which lasts 3 weeks. In total, the author attends 12 English classes and takes down both teacher's and students' performance. Third, after quantitative data is collected, they are all input into SPSS20.0 to be analyzed. According to the research questions, different statistic methods are adopted, including descriptive statistics, canonical correlation analysis, K-means analysis and one-way ANOVA. Fourth, six students are selected to be interviewed according to the results of quantitative research. They are asked to explain the answers they choose in the questionnaires, the purpose of which is to get detailed information and clearer understanding about their true perception of English classroom surroundings, as well as their English learning burnout. Finally, after both quantitative and qualitative data are analyzed, the author makes a detailed discussion to explain why such results are concluded from the present study.

### 6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the author mainly presents the results of both quantitative and qualitative study and makes a detailed discussion over the results.

#### 6.1 Results of quantitative study

The author adopts the questionnaire named CECSI to know about students' perception of their English classroom surroundings. The results of descriptive statistics are as follows:

**Table 3: Results of descriptive statistics for students' perception of classroom surroundings**

Dimensions	The number of items	Average Mean (AM)	Standard Deviation(SD)
Students' Cohesiveness	8	4.68	.62
Teacher Support	8	4.00	.72
Involvement	8	3.95	.55
Task Orientation	7	3.85	.64
Cooperation	7	4.01	.58
Equality	7	4.45	.73

Students Responsibility	6	4.22	.58
Teachers' Leadership	9	3.54	.54
Teachers' Innovation	4	3.56	.64

Table 3 shows a general condition about students' perception of their English classroom surroundings. As CECSI is a five-point scale, the score of each item ranges from 1 point to five points, with 3 points as the medium level. As can be seen from the above table, the average mean of all the nine dimensions of English classroom surroundings is slightly above the medium level 3.00, which means that students' perception of English classroom surroundings is slightly above medium level. The descending rank of the nine dimensions goes like this: student cohesiveness (AM=4.68), teacher support (AM=4.00), equality (AM=4.45), students responsibility (AM=4.22), students cooperation (AM=4.01), involvement (AM=3.95), task orientation (AM=3.85), teacher's innovation (AM=3.56) and teacher's leadership

(AM=3.54). Among the nine dimensions, the average mean of students cohesiveness is the highest and that of teacher's leadership the lowest. Of the five dimensions whose average mean are lower than the overall average mean, three are on teacher's part. They are respectively teacher support (4.00), teacher innovation (3.56) and teacher leadership (3.54), which indicates that students' perception of teacher's performance is lower than that of their own performance in class.

## 6.2 Descriptive statistics for students' English learning burnout

In order to learn about students' English learning burnout, the author adopts FLLBI to obtain data. The results of descriptive statistics are as follows:

**Table 4: Results of descriptive statistics for students' English learning burnout**

Dimensions	The number of items	Average Mean (AM)	Standard Deviation(SD)
Exhaustion	6	2.92	.81
Cynicism	8	3.76	.55
Depersonalization	7	3.34	.87

Table 4 gives a general picture of the overall condition of students' English learning burnout. This questionnaire is a six-point scale. So the medium level is between 3 and 4 points. It can be seen from the table that the average mean of two dimensions of foreign language learning burnout is between 3 and 4 points (Cynicism=3.76, Depersonalization=3.34) and the average mean of the rest one dimension is 2.92, just a little lower than 3.00. This suggests that students' English learning burnout is slightly below the medium level. Besides, of the three dimensions, the average mean of exhaustion is the lowest and that of cynicism is the highest. However, despite the relatively low

average mean, the standard deviation of both exhaustion(.81) and depersonalization (.87) are high, which means there are some students among whom the symptom of exhaustion and depersonalization are severe.

## 6.3 Canonical correlation analysis between classroom surroundings and English learning burnout

Both CECSI and FLLBI involve many variables, therefore canonical correlation analysis is adopted because it can reveal the relationship between the two sets of variables more accurately and reliably (Shell & Husman, 2001). The results are presented in the following tables:

**Table 5: Canonical Correlations**

Canonical factors	Canonical Correlation Coefficients	Wilk's	Chi-SQ	DF	Sig.
1	.642	.558	.51.594	.27.000	.003*
2	.417	.791	.20.768	.16.000	.188
3	.207	.957	3.888	7.000	.793

Table 5 shows that altogether three pairs of typical factors are drawn from canonical correlation analysis, among which only the first pair of typical factors is statistically significant

(CR=.642, Sig=.003), which means classroom surroundings is significantly correlated with English learning burnout.

**Table 6: The results of canonical correlation analysis between classroom surroundings and English learning burnout**

Independent variable (classroom surroundings)	canonical loadings of canonical factor X	Dependent variable (English learning burnout)	Canonical loadings of canonical factor Y
Students Cohesiveness	-.198	Exhaustion	.870
Teacher Support	-.683	Cynicism	.848
Task Orientation	-.631		
Cooperation	-.421		
Equality	-.675		
Students Responsibility	-.721		
Teachers' Leadership	-.601		
Teachers' Innovation	-.553		
Proportion of variance of Set-1 explained by opposite can. Var	120.		.314

Table 6 shows a further and specific relationship between classroom surroundings and English learning burnout. According to the canonical loadings, except the dimensions of students cohesiveness (CL=-.198) and cooperation (-.421), all the other dimensions of classroom surroundings are all negatively and highly correlated with the dimension of exhaustion (CL=.870) and cynicism (CL=.848) of English learning burnout. But all the nine dimensions of classroom surroundings have low correlation with depersonalization. However, the results of redundancy analysis indicates classroom surroundings can only explain 31.4% of the variance of English learning burnout through the typical factor, which suggests that except for classroom

surroundings, there are other factors affecting English learning burnout.

**6.4 Difference in English learning burnout among students with different perceptions of classroom surroundings**

In order to further explore whether there exists significant difference in each dimension of English learning burnout among students with different perception of classroom surroundings, the subjects are firstly classified into three groups according to their perception level of classroom surroundings by adopting K-Means statistics method. The results are as follows:

**Table7. Results of cluster analysis on students' perception of classroom surroundings**

Dimensions	High perception group		Medium perception group		Low perception group	
	AM	SD	AM	SD	AM	SD
Students Cohesiveness	4.00	.37	3.67	.34	3.33	.36
Teacher Support	3.67	.60	2.67	.56	2.33	.47
Involvement	3.29	.40	2.86	.52	2.57	.33
Task Orientation	4.17	.51	3.67	.48	2.83	.31
Cooperation	3.67	.49	3.50	.53	2.74	.59
Equality	4.17	.58	3.33	.67	2.77	.71
Students Responsibility	3.83	.32	3.17	.55	2.85	.34
Teachers' Leadership	3.63	.53	3.50	.63	2.63	.47
Teachers' Innovation	3.50	.44	3.00	.48	3.00	.48
<b>Number</b>	<b>22 (22.92%)</b>		<b>49 (51.04%)</b>		<b>25 (26.04%)</b>	

According to the above table, students are classified into three groups: high perception group whose average mean of each of the nine dimensions is the highest; medium perception group whose scores are between the first and third group and low perception group whose average mean of the nine dimensions is the lowest. Of the three groups, those who belong to medium perception level group take up the largest percent (51.04%), which further testifies the

conclusion drawn from descriptive statistics that students' overall perception of English classroom surroundings is at medium level. Taking a further observation, we can find that students' perception of students cohesiveness and teacher innovation doesn't differ greatly among the three groups. However, different groups of students exhibit drastic perception difference in terms of task orientation, students' responsibility, teacher support and equality.

**Table 8: Results of one-way ANOVA analysis of English learning burnout among the three groups**

Dimensions of ELB	High perception group	Medium perception group	Low perception group	F	P
	AM	(SD)	AM		
Exhaustion	2.61 (.50)	2.65 (.52)	3.30 (.46)	7.514	.001**
Cynicism	3.53 (.47)	3.66(.51)	3.99 (.48)	4.265	.017*
Depersonalization	2.83 (.59)	3.11 (.48)	3.11 (.50)	2.111	.127

By test, the data are in normal distribution and homogeneity of variance. Besides, comparison needs to be made between three groups. Therefore, one-way ANOVA analysis is adopted to explore whether there exists significant difference in English learning burnout between the three groups. As is

shown in Table 8, except the dimension of depersonalization (Sig=.127), there exists significant difference in exhaustion (Sig=.001) and cynicism (Sig=.017) among the three groups. The result suggests that students tend to suffer the similar degree of depersonalization.

**Table 9: Results of comparison between any two of the three groups in English learning burnout**

Dimensions of ELB	Comparison groups		
	HPG VS. MGP	HGP VS. LGP	MPG VS. LPG
<b>Exhaustion</b>	.826	.001**	.001**
<b>Cynicism</b>	.422	.005**	.048*
<b>Depersonalization</b>	.039*	.043*	.241

In order to further explore the difference between any two of the three groups, post testing is done. The results show that

between high perception group and medium perception group, there exists significant difference only in the

dimension of depersonalization (Sig.=.39). As for high perception group and low perception group, there exists significant difference in all the three dimensions (Sig.=.001, .005 and .043). With regard to medium perception group and low perception group, there exists significant difference in both exhaustion and cynicism (Sig.=.001, .048).

### 6.5 Results of qualitative Study

As is mentioned in chapter three, two qualitative methods: semi-structured interview and classroom observation are adopted to obtain in-depth data to testify the results of quantitative study. As for the interview, six students with different perception of classroom surroundings are selected to participate in it.

During classroom observation, the author finds that the classroom atmosphere is generally harmonious. Students can chat and play with each other happily during class breaks. They also tend to help each other when difficulties in learning arise. However, they are mostly inactive in answering teachers' questions, nor do they have interest and motivation in participating in class activities. When the teacher asks them to discuss in groups and select a representative to report the discussion results, no one would like to volunteer. What's more, some students display an indifferent attitude and exclude themselves from the discussion, thus completely rely on others to finish the teacher's assignment. As for the teacher's part, she leaves too much time for students in class, during which most of them would get bored and start to idle away the time aimlessly. Besides, the teacher relies too much on the course wares or power point and gives little explanation. Both in and after class, she only chats with students in the front row and seldom walks around the classroom to inspect students' learning or to ask whether they need any help. So the teacher doesn't manage the time in class very properly sometimes. Nor does she give equal concern to students. In addition, the author also notices that some students, especially the boys, tend to behave improperly in class. They either sleep, chat with their desk-mates or check their mobile phones frequently. Some even don't have their textbooks with them or take the liberty to do assignments of another subjects in the English class. When asked a question in class, he or she just remains silent.

## 7. DISCUSSION

In this part, the author will discuss the results of quantitative and qualitative study combined together and explain why such results are concluded.

Table 3 shows that students are satisfied with their English classroom surroundings on the whole. They have a comparatively favorable classroom surroundings to study in. This conclusion roughly agrees with that of Sun Yunmei (2010) and Li Guangfeng's studies (2012). What is noticeable is that in Sun and Li's studies, students' perception of teacher leadership ranks the highest among the nine dimensions, however, in this study, the average mean of this dimension ranks the lowest while student cohesiveness ranks the highest. Maybe the difference of research subjects can account for this drastic distinction. The subjects in Sun and Li's studies are students from key

universities while the subjects in the present study are from an average one. There exists great disparity in both the quality of teaching faculty and students' fundamental English level. Therefore the perception difference in teacher leadership is possible. As for high perception of students' cohesiveness, many other studies have made the same conclusion (Liu, 2015; Lv, 2016). Students' seats in college English classes are not fixed, therefore it is possible for each of them to have different desk-mates in each English class. Thus they have the chances to get familiar with every classmate. In addition, as they have fewer chances to meet and communicate with their English teacher in college, classmates become the reliable subjects to whom they can turn for help. Thus they can develop a certain bond with each other and become dependent on each other.

However, the low perception of involvement indicates that students seldom participate in class activities. According to the interviews, regardless of their level of perception of English classroom surroundings, they all think that the learning tasks arranged by the teacher are not appealing to them. More importantly, they seem not to believe that taking active part in class activities can improve their English directly over a short term, nor can it ensure their success in their College English Test (Band-4). It can also be concluded that examination-oriented system is still deeply rooted in China despite various reforms.

As for low perception of teacher support, college English classes are given in a large classroom with about 100 students, the teacher cannot take each students' need into consideration. Students have less opportunities to meet and communicate with their English teacher. Therefore, they feel little personal support and help from the teacher. With regard to the low perception of teacher innovation, students interviewed reflect that their teacher relies too much on Power Point, which they have already been tired of. They say that more often than not, the teacher just reads the content on Power Point. The author also notices during classroom observation that the teaching process in each English class is lack of variety and the teacher seldom tries new teaching methods or introduces new teaching materials based on different teaching content.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This chapter firstly summarizes the major findings of the present study and points out its pedagogical implications, followed by the limitations of the present study and some suggestions for future researches.

This study adopts quantitative and qualitative methods to explore the relationship between college English classroom surroundings and English learning burnout. The major findings are as follows: firstly, the results of descriptive statistics for college English classroom surroundings indicate that students' perception of their English classroom surroundings is at medium level, which means they have a relatively favorable classroom surroundings to study in. Among the nine dimensions, their perception of students cohesiveness is the highest and perception of teacher leadership is the lowest, which indicates that students can learn collaboratively with their fellow classmates but they are

have limited chances to interact with their teachers and are not likely to turn to their teachers for help when problems arise. Besides, their perception of the teacher's performance in class is lower than that for their own performance.

Secondly, the results of descriptive statistics for English learning burnout suggest that students suffer medium degree of English learning burnout. Of the three dimensions, cynicism is the most serious symptom while exhaustion is the least serious one, which means students tend to hold an indifferent and negative attitude towards English learning but they don't feel so exhausted in English learning.

Thirdly, the results of canonical correlation analysis show that college English classroom surroundings is significantly and negatively correlated with English learning burnout, but it can only partly predicts English learning burnout, which means there are many other factors that also account for English learning burnout. It is mainly students' responsibility, teacher support, equality, task orientation, and teacher leadership that exert great influence on exhaustion and cynicism of English learning burnout.

Fourthly, there exists significant difference in depersonalization between high and medium perception groups. But this difference is insignificant between medium and low perception groups. Instead, the difference is significant in the dimensions of exhaustion and cynicism between these two groups. What worth noticing is that there exists significant difference in all the three dimensions of English learning burnout between high and low perception groups, which further verifies that students' perception of the classroom surroundings can greatly influence their level of English learning burnout.

Although the uncontrollable factors have been reduced as far as possible, there still exist some limitations in the present study. One limitation is that the research sample is small. Only a total of 96 non-English majors participate in this research and they are all from the same university with similar majors, thus the research results may not be so convincing and representative. Future studies with a larger sample and a higher degree of variety are needed to produce more reliable and convincing findings. Another limitation is that the questionnaire employed to measure students' English learning burnout in this research is originally designed for English majors and the author adopts it without any revision. So some of the items in the questionnaire might not be suitable for non-English majors, therefore the data collected might not be so highly reliable. Therefore, future studies should take students' major into consideration and choose a more reliable questionnaire to measure students English learning burnout.

Finally, the pedagogical implication of the present study is that the teacher should adopt different countermeasures for students with different classroom surroundings perception so as to effectively reduce students' level of learning burnout. For example, the research results show that there exists significant difference in depersonalization between high and medium perception, so the teacher should give students with medium perception of classroom surroundings more praise and encouragement in the process of their English learning, *Aiqin Wang et al., isij-ijsssei, (2018)*

especially when they make progresses, which will enhance their self-confidence and self-efficacy so as to help lessen their English learning burnout. As for the significant difference in exhaustion and cynicism between medium and low perception groups, the teacher can design some class activities that are interesting enough to arouse the interest of those students with low classroom surroundings perception, and at the same time ensure that these activities should be easily manageable and within their ability.

To sum up, both students and teachers should make changes on their own parts and contribute to establishing a favorable surroundings for teaching and learning so as to relieve learning burnout and improve learning efficiency.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study is supported by: 1) the Teaching and Research Foundation of Anhui Provincial Department of Education (Grant No.: 2016jyxm0618); 2) Youth Foundation of Anqing Teachers College (Grant No.: SK201114); 3) the State-level Characteristic Discipline Project of Ministry of Education, China (Grant No.: TS12154).

### REFERENCES

- [1] Aldridge, J. M., Fraser, B. J., & Huang, T. C. I. (1999). *Investigating classroom surroundings in Taiwan and Australia with multiple research methods*. The Journal of Educational Research, 93(1), 48-62.
- [2] Anderson, G. J. & Walberg, H. J. (1974). *Learning surroundings* in H. J. Walberg (Ed.) *Evaluating educational performance: A sourcebook of methods, instruments and examples*. Berkeley, CA: Mc Cutchan Publishing.
- [3] Anderson, G. J. & Walberg, H. J. *Classroom climate and individual learning*. (1968). *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 59, 414-419.
- [4] Anderson, L.W., Ryan, D.W., & Shapiro, B.J. (Ed.) (1989). *The IEA Classroom surroundings Study*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- [5] Chionh, Y. H. & Fraser, B. J. (1998). *Validation and use of 'What is happening in this Class'(WIHIC) questionnaire in Singapore*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the *American Educational Research Association*, San Diego, CA.
- [6] Ehrman, M. (1996). An exploration of adult language learner motivation, self-efficacy and anxiety. In R. L. Oxford (Ed.), *Language Learning Motivation: Pathways to the New Century* (pp.81-104) Manoa: University of Hawaii Press.
- [7] Felder, R.M. & Hen Lriques, E.R. (1995) *Learning and Teaching Styles in Foreign and Second Language Education*. *Foreign Language Anna* 28 (1): 21-31.
- [8] Fisher, D. L. & Fraser, B. J. (1981c). *Validity and Use of Classroom surroundings Scale*. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 5, 261-271.
- [9] Fisher, D. L., & Fraser, B. J. (1983). A comparison of actual and preferred classroom surroundings as perceived by science teachers and students.



- Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 20, 55-61.
- [10] Fraser B. J. *Classroom surroundings*. (2012). Oxford: Routledge.
- [11] Fraser, B. J. & Anderson (1998b). *Science learning surroundings: Assessment, effects and determinants*. in B. J. Fraser & K. G. Tobin (Eds.). The international handbook of science education, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 527-564.
- [12] Fraser, B. J. & Mc Robbic, C. J. (1995). *Science laboratory classroom surroundings at schools and universities: a cross-national study*. Educational Research and Evaluation, 1, 289-317.
- [13] Goh, S.C., Young, D.J. & Fraser, B.J. (1995). *Psychosocial climate and student outcomes in elementary mathematics classrooms: a multilevel analysis*. Journal of Experimental Education. 64, 29-40.
- [14] Haertel, G. D. (1981). *Socio-psychological surroundings and Learning: a Quantitative Synthesis*. British Educational Research Journal, 7, 27-36.
- [15] Majeed, A., Fraser, B. J. & Aldridge, (2002). *Learning surroundings and its association with student satisfaction among mathematics students in Brunei Darussalam*. Learning surroundings Research, 2,307-330.
- [16] Spolsky, B. *Conditions for Second Language Learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989: 25.
- [17] Stern, G. G. (1970). *People in Context: Measuring Person- surroundings Congruence in Education and Industry*. New York: Wiley.
- [18] Williams, M. & Robert L. Burden. *Psychology for Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- [19] Yin Cheongcheng. (1994) *Classroom surroundings and student affective performance: an effective Profile*. Journal of Experimental Education, 3, 221-239.
- [20] Zandvliet, D. B & Fraser, B. J. (1999). *The physical and pschosocial surroundings associated with classrooms using new information technologies: A cross-national study*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Western Australia.