

The Correlation between Lectures on Topics Unrelated to Language and Learner's Motivation for Language Learning

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Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES)

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Driven to Discover®

My Teaching

- Teaching the same level(s) in Fall and Spring semesters for one academic year
- Having a guest speaker once per semester
 - Lecture in English for 40-45 minutes
 - **Introduction in English for 10-15 minutes the day before**
 - Discussion in English for 10-15 minutes the day after



Caren Stelson



Sachiko: a Nagasaki Bomb Survivor's Story

This striking work of narrative nonfiction tells the true story of six-year-old Sachiko Yasui's survival of the Nagasaki atomic bomb on August 9, 1945, and the heartbreaking and lifelong aftermath. Having conducted extensive interviews with Sachiko Yasui, Caren Stelson chronicles Sachiko's long journey toward peace. This special book offers readers a remarkable new perspective on the final moments of World War II, the fifty years that followed, and the courage it took for one woman to tell her story of nuclear war and peace.

Awards and Recognition

- 2017 Robert F. Sibert Honor Award for Information Books, ALSC
- 2017 Bank Street College Best Children's Books of the Year List
- 2017 Bank Street College of Education Flora Stieglitz Straus Award
- 2017 Notable Children's Books, ALSC
- 2017-2018 ALA-CBC Reading Beyond List
- 2016 American Library Association Notable Book
- 2017 *Booklist* Top 10 Diverse Nonfiction for Youth
- 2017 CCBC Choices
- 2016 Cybils Award for Middle Grade Non-Fiction
- 2016 Eureka! Nonfiction Children's Book Award
- 2017 Jane Addams Children's Book Award for books for older children
- 2017 Minnesota Book Award finalist, Middle Grade Literature
- 2016 Junior Library Guild selection
- 2016 National Book Award Longlist, Young People's Literature
- 2016 National Consortium for Teaching About Asia, Freeman Book Award, Honorable Mention, Young Adult/High School Literature
- 2016 Nerdies: Long-Form Nonfiction
- 2016 New York Public Library Best Books for Teens
- 2017 Notable Books for a Global Society
- 2017 Notable Social Studies Trade Books, NCSS, CBC
- 2017 Orbis Pictus Award for Nonfiction, Recommended Book, NCTE

<https://www.carenstelson.com/>



Caren Stelson's Lecture

- Who is Sachiko?
 - Storyteller in Nagasaki
- Why did Caren decide to write about Sachiko?
 - First meeting at the 60th WWII commemoration in St. Paul in 2005 and interviewing her in Nagasaki for ten years
- What can we learn from Sachiko's story?
- What is peace?
 - "Peace is not a noun. Peace is a verb. Peace is action. Peace takes courage."

= unrelated to language learning directly



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 - “I want to be better at Japanese.”*
 - “The lecture made me feel like studying Japanese more.”*
- Do lectures on topics unrelated to language increase learner’s motivation for language learning?



What is motivation? What does it do?

- Keller (1983)
 - defined motivation as “the neglected heart of instructional design” (p. 390)
 - identified ability (what a person can do) and motivation (what a person will do) as the major sources of variation in educational success
- Csizér & Dörnyei (2005)
 - defined L2 motivation as “the desire to reduce the perceived discrepancies between the learner’s actual self and his or her ideal and ought-to L2 selves” (p. 617)
 - motivated learners have successfully developed a salient ideal L2 self, which was also associated with an interest in foreign languages in general



How is motivation enhanced?

- Gardner (2001)

Four factors that influence second language learning

- Contact

with communities/organizations

- Variety of Experience

by using target language

- Ability

= language aptitude

- Psychological Identification

the capacity for learners to
perceive themselves

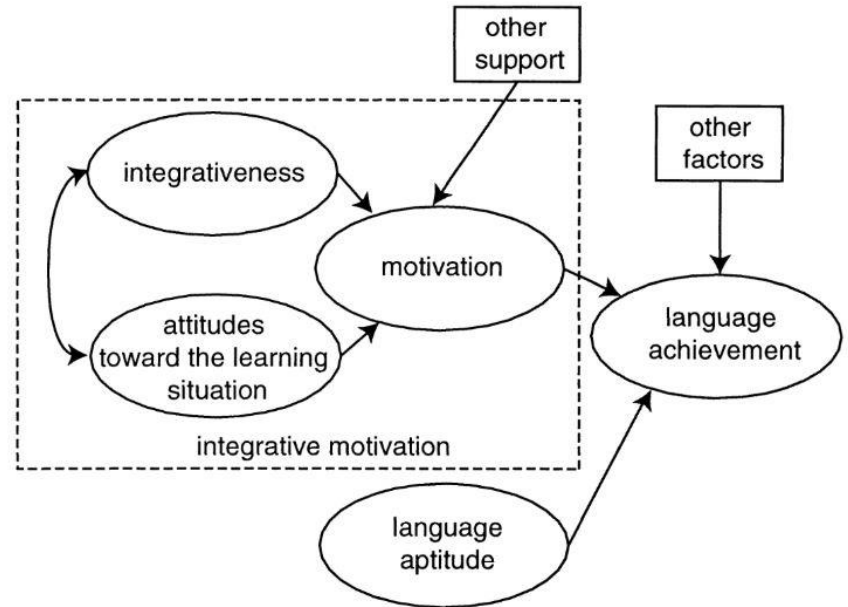


Figure 1: Basic model of the role of aptitude and motivation in second language learning



Caren Stelson's Visit

[Fall 2016]

- JPN 3021 Sections 001, 002, and 003 – 55 students

[Summer 2017]

- JPN 3021 Section 001 – 19 students

[Fall 2018]

- JPN 3031 Sections 001, 002, and 003 – 44 students

[Fall 2019]

- JPN 3031 Sections 001, 002, and 050 – 50 students

Total – 168 Students

JPN 3021: The first half of Intermediate Japanese

JPN 3031: The first half of Third-Year Japanese



Q1. What was your motivation to study Japanese?

[Culture and Economics] – 47%

- Anime/Manga, Music, Fashion
- Cuisine
- Electronic industry
- Cars and motorcycles
- **History – 6%**

[Language] – 40%

- Love of how the language sounds
- Unique writing system
- Languages in general to communicate with others in their languages

[Future Career] – 27%

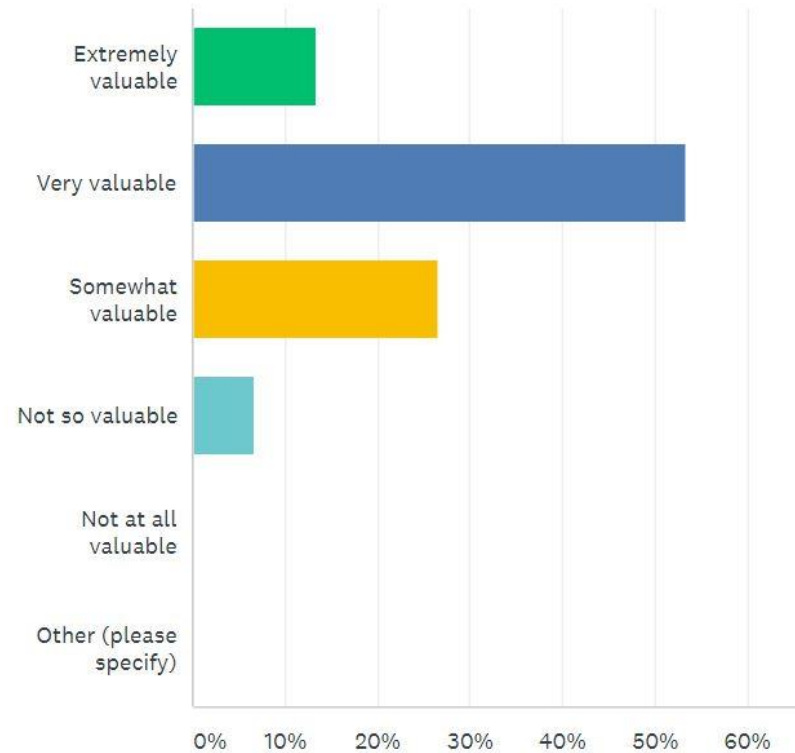
- Work/Live in Japan
- Want to work as a translator

[Family/Relatives] – 7%

- Grandmother/Father/Mother is Japanese



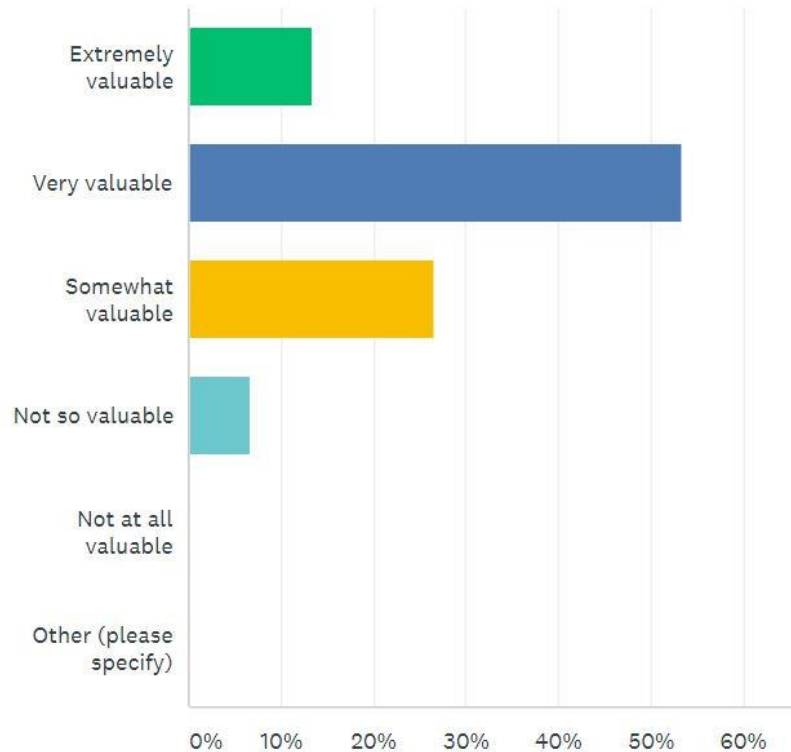
Q2. How was Caren's visit over all? What made you think so?



- Listening to her speak was fulfilling as a learner of Japanese culture/history.
- She talked to us about important topics that shouldn't be forgotten.
- Learning about different cultural perspectives is very valuable.
- The information about the history of the bombing from the eyes of someone who experienced it was very valuable for expanding my mindset beyond what we had learned in our history lessons.
- It was great to learn her life and how she was influenced by a Japanese person.
- It was nice hearing a real story.



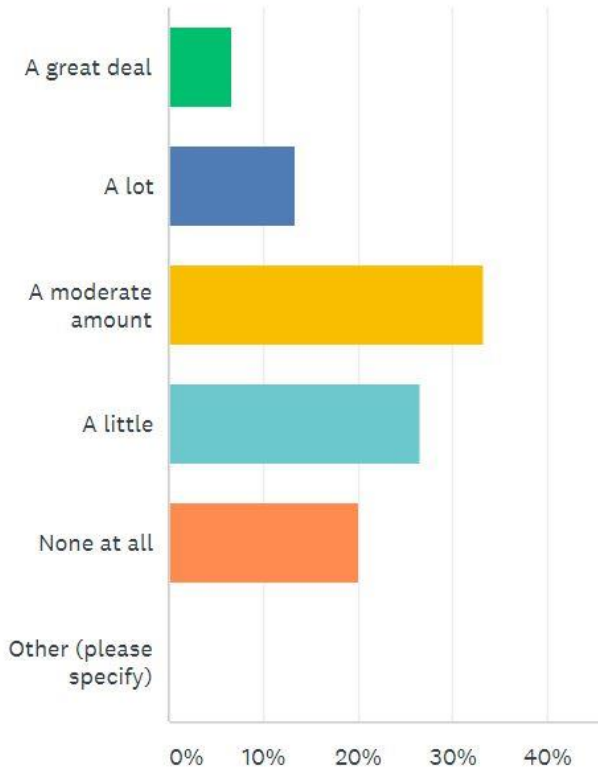
Q2. How was Caren's visit over all? What made you think so?



- The presentation wasn't related to Japanese/language learning.
- The guest that worked as a JET was more interesting to listen to; his experience studying Japanese and living in Japan is more applicable to most students' goals and motivation behind their language.



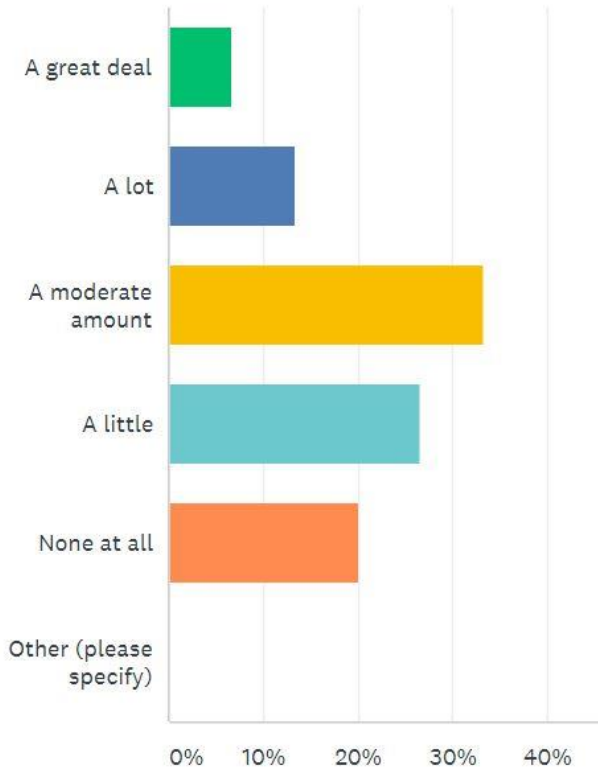
Q3. Did Caren's visit increase your motivation to continue language study? What made you think so?



- It showed me and really emphasized how language is more than just the words/pronunciation.
- I realized that learning languages bridges people together and promotes mutual understanding between different cultures.
- I wish I could talk to Sachiko-san in Japanese.
- Made studying the language seem more practical besides learning to speak and read.
- Seeing these stories and their international reach and how they can affect folks is very cool.
- Being exposed to stories like these makes me personally feel more connected towards the language.



Q3. Did Caren's visit increase your motivation to continue language study? What made you think so?



- It just overall made me enjoy the class more having speakers come in, so because I enjoyed the class more I was more motivated to learn the language.
- My desire to continue was already pretty solid.
- I was always very passionate about Japanese studies to begin with. Whether or not she had visited has no effect on this positively or negatively.
- It wasn't related to my language study.



Q4. Is there anything specific in your language study that was affected by Caren's lecture?

- I had a better appreciation for Japanese people and language, knowing that Japan also went through its share of turmoil of war and how the country turned out today.
- It allowed us as language learners to develop our views to become more well rounded and aware of events in the target language.
- I realized that how one's personality changes depending the language that they speak and that my personality is different depending on whether I speak English, Vietnamese, or Japanese. It was cool to acknowledge it.

= Psychological Identification was stimulated: they raised their capacity to perceive themselves

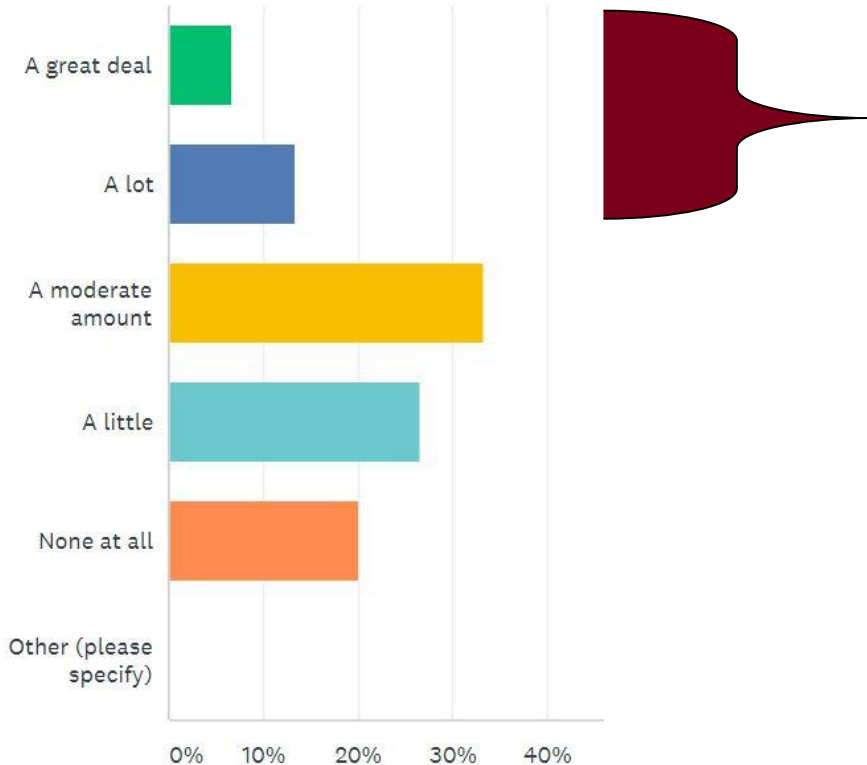


Conclusion and Discussion

- Lectures on topics unrelated to language and language learning can enhance learners' motivation for language learning when their psychological identification is stimulated (= when they develop their perception of themselves)
 - Teachers should not hesitate to integrate topics unrelated to language and language learning into the classroom as far as they stimulate learners' psychological identification
- No control/comparison groups
 - Research on influencing learners' motivation by different guest speakers
- No data of learners' background
 - Research on influencing learners' motivation by their language/culture history



Q3. Did Caren's visit increase your motivation to continue language study? What made you think so?



- In “A great deal” and “A lot” there are much more students whose heritage language is not English than those whose native language is English



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Questions and Comments?

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Thank you very much!

