

Edward Sapir

Quotes

*Language, Expression, World, Simplicity, Spirit, Different, Facts,
Communication, Art, Fashion, Analysis, Anthropology, Would Be, Latin, Secret,
Limits, Want, Doe, Attitude, Normal*

Language is the most massive and inclusive art we know, a mountainous and anonymous work of unconscious generations.

~Edward Sapir

Language is an anonymous, collective and unconscious art; the result of the creativity of thousands of generations.

~Edward Sapir

We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation.

~Edward Sapir

Nonverbal communication is an elaborate secret code that is written nowhere, known by none, and understood by all.

~Edward Sapir

Cultural anthropology is not valuable because it uncovers the archaic in the psychological sense. It is valuable because it is constantly rediscovering the normal.

~Edward Sapir

I am convinced that the stratigraphic method will in the future enable archaeology to throw far more light on the history of American culture than it has done in the past.

~Edward Sapir

The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group.

~Edward Sapir

In a sense, every form of expression is imposed upon one by social factors, one's own language above all.

~Edward Sapir

No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality.

~Edward Sapir

One of the glories of English simplicity is the possibility of using the same word as noun and verb.

~Edward Sapir

Cultural anthropology is more and more rapidly getting to realize itself as a strictly historical science.

~Edward Sapir

A standard international language should not only be simple, regular, and logical, but also rich and creative.

~Edward Sapir

What fetters the mind and benumbs the spirit is ever the dogged acceptance of absolutes.

~Edward Sapir

National languages are all huge systems of vested interests which sullenly resist critical inquiry.

~Edward Sapir

It is no secret that the fruits of language study are in no sort of relation to the labour spent on teaching and learning them.

~Edward Sapir

It would, of course, be hopeless to attempt to crowd into an international language all those local overtones of meaning which are so dear to the heart of the nationalist.

~Edward Sapir

A firm, for instance, that does business in many countries of the world

is driven to spend an enormous amount of time, labour, and money in providing for translation services.

~Edward Sapir

A logical analysis of reflexive usages in French shows, however, that this simplicity is an illusion and that, so far from helping the foreigner, it is more calculated to bother him.

~Edward Sapir

Impatience translates itself into a desire to have something immediate done about it all, and, as is generally the case with impatience, resolves itself in the easiest way that lies ready to hand.

~Edward Sapir

The spirit of logical analysis should in practice blend with the practical pressure for the adoption of some form of international language, but it should not allow itself to be stampeded by it.

~Edward Sapir

More and more, unsolicited gifts from without are likely to be received with unconscious resentment.

~Edward Sapir

Fashion is custom in the guise of departure from custom

~Edward Sapir

As a matter of fact, a national language which spreads beyond its own confines very quickly loses much of its original richness of content and is in no better case than a constructed language.

~Edward Sapir

Human beings do not wish to be modest; they want to be as expressive - that is, as immodest - as fear allows; fashion helps them solve that paradoxical problem.

~Edward Sapir

Were a language ever completely "grammatical" it would be a perfect engine of conceptual expression. Unfortunately, or luckily, no language is tyrannically consistent. All grammars leak.

~Edward Sapir

These examples of the lack of simplicity in English and French, all appearances to the contrary, could be multiplied almost without limit and apply to all national languages.

~Edward Sapir

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