

# Journal 03: Language & Listening

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Prompt responded to:

1. *What examples have you seen of people using language for **convergence** or **divergence**? Give an example of each. What do you infer they are trying to accomplish with each of these approaches?*
2. *Examine a room in your house or someone else's house. Consider the nonverbal messages that a visitor could 'listen to' from the room's layout, design, and décor. Reflect on how the arrangement of objects, colors, and space might communicate certain feelings, values, or personality traits to an observer. If you are discussing a room in your house, do you think these messages align with your intended communication? Would you change anything about the room to better convey the message you want a visitor to 'hear'?*

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Language convergence and divergence are actually very common subtle ways to fit into/stand out of the crowd and to express oneself identity.

A common form of convergence is adopting regional accents. This is either done consciously or unconsciously but, the reason often remains the same: to be more easily understood (in that region) *or* to be accepted socially in a community. The former can easily be seen through the example of an American traveling to the UK, only to be met with confusion and bewilderment when asking for chips in a pub and getting fried potatoes in response. Overtime the American will begin switching out their lexicon for something more palatable for the region but, when they come back home from the trip, they will once again be misunderstood. This is a stale joke about the differences between cultures overseas but, nonetheless it holds true to our definition of language convergence.

A common form of *divergence* is a more nationalistic example (compared to the previous one) of a foreigner away from home: someone entering a new country with preconceived negative opinions of it (or its people) might intentionally hyperbolize their home accent/lingo in order to make a stance; someone in a new space without a better self-defense mechanic (for new/uncomfortable scenarios) may hold tight to their familiar form of language for comfort—or similarly they may just take pride in their country and choose to wear their home language like a badge of honor.

The room I am choosing to examine in my house is my room. Many of the nonverbal messages that a visitor could 'listen to' include simple, messy, bare, and efficient. The

arrangement of the room is one that especially promotes efficiency but, I wish it also gave off something a little more personal. Currently, my room is rather dull. I have a few posters and some little things that I've put up to convey what types of things I like but, it still feels outdated. I want my room to feel more dynamic and livelier. I'd want to replace my old posters with ones that reflect my current interests better. Maybe I'd also put up a unique painting or two (even possibly painting my own). I'd like to either switch out my dresser or paint it—my current dresser is an unpainted wooden dresser from IKEA. Then finally, I'd like to add some more life to the room by adding some plants, and maybe even some fresh ivy to wrap around different borders in my room. This would bring a much more lively and personalized atmosphere to my room that creates a more comfortable and unique space.