Hypervernacularisation and speaker design: A case study[1]

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In dialect contact situations, *hyperdialectisms* are a common form of hyper-adaptation. They are the result of the production of overgeneralised forms in non-standard dialects due to bad analysis. They occur either because of insufficient knowledge about a given linguistic feature or because of excessive effort to show vernacular identity. Adopting the framework of *Speaker-Design Theory*, which assumes that speakers mould their speech to project a particular image, the present article shows the use of the related phenomenon of *hypervernacularisation*. This refers to non-standard forms used correctly, though inappropriately, according to socio-demographic and/or stylistic parameters. Though both hyperdialectism and hypervernacularisation are linguistic processes resulting from dialect contact, hyperdialectism is related to incorrectness, whereas hypervernacularisation is associated with inappropriateness. The unexpected use of vernacular forms by an upper-class speaker in non-informal contexts appears to be a strategy to project downward social mobility and a working-class image.

Keywords: hyperadaptation, hyperdialectism, hypervernacularisation, style shifting, speaker design, standardness/non-standardness, overt/covert prestige models

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1. Introduction

1.1. Style shifting and Speaker-Design Theory

Traditional variationist accounts of style shifting as primarily a responsive phenomenon cannot fully account for all stylistic choices – see for instance Labov's (1972) Attention-to-Speech approach and Bell's (1984) Audience Design model. To deal with this shortcoming, more recent approaches to style shifting (e.g. Bell 2001, Coupland 2001a, 2001b, 2007) characterise stylistic variation as creative and strategic, and as essential to displaying and shaping identity and furthering situational goals, thus providing a fuller picture of people's stylistic choices.

Style in general is a multidimensional phenomenon controlled by socio-demographic, contextual and linguistic factors. It cannot therefore be accounted for by unidimensional theories such as Accommodation Theory (which stems from the Attention-to-Speech approach) or Audience Design (which is solely audience-related). Stylistic studies, as Eckert & Rickford (2001: 2) note, need to propose a more flexible approach capable of taking into consideration the three main components of sociolinguistic variation: *stylistic* (or intra-speaker), *linguistic* and *social* (or inter-speaker).

In this connection, the more recently developed *Speaker-Design Theory* (SD) is a multidimensional model that takes into account non-demographic (speaker-internal: purpose, key, frame, etc.) as well as demographic (speaker-external: age, familiarity, audience, topic, setting, etc.) characteristics of audience members as factors influencing the agency of the speaker in the shaping of style or language choice (see e.g. Coupland 1985, 2001a, Traugott & Romaine 1985, Schilling-Estes 1999, 2002). Speaker-Design Theory, rooted in social-constructionist approaches,[2] greatly benefits from the insights offered by anthropological research on performative speech events. It views stylistic variation as a resource in the active creation, presentation and even recreation of speaker-individual and interpersonal identity – in other words, stylistic variation is viewed as a resource for creating as well as projecting one's persona (see Eckert & Rickford 2001, Schilling-Estes 2002).

In SD, speakers' linguistic behaviour should be understood as an active process of identity-building. However, this process has some limitations: SD acknowledges that speaker performance is constrained by socio-situational

[2] The relationship between language and society is co-constitutive: each influences the other.

factors, but in spite of this, it focuses on the constructivist side, that is, on how individuals build up their identities through their language use.[3]

1.2. Hyperdialectism and hypervernacularisation

In dialect contact situations, *hyperdialectisms,* as proposed by Larsen (1917) and popularised by Trudgill (1983, 1986, 2003), are a common form of hyper-adaptation. They are the result of speakers' production of overgeneralised forms in non-standard dialects due to the erroneous application of the linguistic rules. They occur either because of insufficient knowledge about the target linguistic variety or excessive effort in showing vernacular identity.[4] As a result, interdialectal forms arise. A nice example is given by Trudgill (1986: 67), who illustrates the consequences of the contact between London English and East-Anglian English, an endangered regional variety. East-Anglian relic varieties preserve the original Middle English (ME) *ā* and *ai* monophthong–diphthong contrast, as in *daze* (/de:z/) and *days* (/deɪz/). The evolution of the long vowel /a:/ was a continuous process of palatalisation (raising), together with closure: ME /a:/ shifted to /æ:/, later to /ɛ:/, after a stage of variability during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and later to /e:/ in the early eighteenth century. In the late eighteenth century, /e:/ underwent a process of long–mid diphthonging, which resulted in the diphthongisation of /e:/ to /eɪ/ in words like *gate*, *face* and *made*, merging with the ME diphthongs /ɛɪ/ and /æɪ/. The ME diphthongs /aɪ/ and /ɛɪ/ underwent different qualitative and quantitative processes, particularly connected to the homorganic influence of one element of the diphthong on the

[3] An extreme case of this is Coupland's (2001a) study of dialect stylisation in radio broadcasting. He analyses excerpts from a radio programme broadcast by Welsh BBC and shows how the presenter and one of his collaborators build up an image of Welshness, half-way between parody and identification, which does not necessarily reflect their own natural speech. They are performing the roles and stereotypes of Welsh speakers, thus building an identity that simultaneously reflects and questions the nature of assumed cultural and linguistic identity features. The theoretical implications of dialect stylisation have been broadly discussed by Hill (1999).

[4] Hyperdialectisms often arise out of attitudinal factors: speakers may be too 'willing' to produce dialectal forms either because they have a positive attitude towards the dialect or, for instance, because they want to help the interlocutor. In fact, hyperdialectisms may occur as a result of a kind of 'neighbourhood opposition' between two varieties, that is, "when dialect speakers overgeneralise differences between their own and neighbouring dialects in order to symbolise their separate identities" (Trudgill 2003: 60).

Table 1. Long–mid mergers (Middle English /a:/ and /ɛɪ/–/æɪ/)

	Middle English –1300	Great Vowel Shift 1450–1600	Long–mid mergers 1600–1700	18th c. raising 1700–1800	Long-mid-diphthonging 1800–
pane, *name*, *raze*, *daze*	/a:/	/æ:/-/ɛ:/	/ɛ:/	/e:/	/eɪ/
pain, *raise*, *days*	/ɛɪ/-/æɪ/	–			

Source: Conde-Silvestre & Hernández-Campoy (1998: 174)

other: /aɪ/ > /ɛɪ/ > /ɛe/ > /ɛ:/ or /e:/. The long monophthong resulting from this process followed the Great Vowel Shift and was assimilated to or merged with (long–mid merging) the development of ME long /a:/ > /ɛ:/ > /e:/, thus it developed into the diphthong /eɪ/ in the late eighteenth century, as Table 1 shows.

According to Trudgill (1990: 60), the process of long–mid diphthonging probably started in educated speech in the southeast of England, particularly in London, then spread to other areas of the country. The hyperdialectal realisation of *days* as /de:z/ in East-Anglian English is an overgeneralisation of a vestigial form due to the confusion of both lexical sets (*days–daze*, or *pain–pane*):

Standard	**London**	**East Anglia**	
days	/deɪz/	/dæɪz/	/dæɪz/ ⇒ /de:z/
daze	/deɪz/	/dæɪz/	/de:z/

Yet in other situations, the use of dialectal forms may be due not to misanalysis but rather to inappropriate performance. That would be the case of *hypervernacularisation*, whose counterpart would be *hyperstandardisation*.[5]

[5] We avoid using the term *hypercorrection* because of its ideological bias, as it tends to equate the standard variety with 'correct' models. By contrast, the label *hyperstandardisation* seems to be more politically adequate to refer to the inappropriate performance of prestige models socially and/or stylistically. Yet, as Trudgill points out (personal communication), we have to admit that important reasons in favour of the label 'hypercorrection', as opposed to hyperstandardisation, would be: (i) it is most often a feature

Hypervernacularisation refers to the use of non-standard forms correctly (without any wrong analysis), though inappropriately according to socio-demographic and/or stylistic parameters. *Hypervernacular* speech must thus not be confused with *hyperdialectism*. The difference lies in the fact that, as pointed out above, hyperdialectal speech implies the incorrect extension of vernacular features to linguistic contexts where these do not apply; in a way, hyperdialectal speech entails incorrect use of the non-standard system (grammar or phonology). In other words, though both linguistic processes result from dialect contact, hyperdialectism is related to incorrectness, hypervernacularisation to inappropriateness.

1.3. Aims of the study

Adopting the perspective of SD, which, as noted earlier, assumes that speakers design their speech to project a particular image, the present article analyses the use and characteristics of hypervernacularisation, as exemplified in the unexpected (and controversial) use of many features of the local dialect by a female former President of the Autonomous Region of Murcia, in southeastern Spain. Surprisingly, as will be shown below, the President uses more dialect features than any member of the other social groups we looked at, and in more formal contexts. Her hyperuse of Murcian dialect features indicates that she does not shift her speech in reaction to formality, or even to accommodate the many Murcians in her audience (whose speech is more standard than her own). Rather, she breaks free from any sociolinguistic patterns, constraints and norms, using dialect features to project a persona in pursuit of her political goals.

2. Data: speakers and variables

2.1. Speakers

We examined a selection of broadcasts from the local radio-station archives (Murcia Cadena SER) made between 1993 and 1996, when our main informant was President of Murcia. Together with her (Group 1), the radio archives also allowed us to analyse three other female Murcian politicians (Group 2), twelve

of phonology, and very many languages do not really have a standard phonology; and (ii) it is a failed attempt to change an utterance to what the speaker perceives to be a more prestigious or indeed more correct pronunciation.

Table 2. Typology of informants

Group	Type of informant	Informants	Samples	Instances
Group 1	Female Murcian politician: President of the Murcia Region	1	5	1,693
Group 2	Female Murcian politicians	3	4	604
Group 3	Male Murcian politicians (politician class)	12	12	1,770
Group 4	Male Murcian non-politicians (middle-lower class)	8	8	1,360
Group 5	Non-Murcian male politicians	8	9	1,514
Total		32	38	6,941

male Murcian politicians (Group 3), eight male non-politicians from Murcia (Group 4), and five male politicians from northern areas of Spain (Group 5) whose local dialect (standard Castilian Spanish) is quite different from the southern Murcian variety (see Table 2). Because of the socio-political characteristics of the period – the media were dominated by the mainstream social conservative politics – it was not possible to obtain an equal number of speakers in the categories we initially designed: as women's overt participation in political life and decision-taking was still unusual, the available radio recordings consisted predominantly of male speakers.

Our data consisted of 38 speech samples from 32 informants, each with an average duration of 10 to 15 minutes, which yielded 6,941 tokens of the studied linguistic variables.

Speech was taken from a variety of discourse genres (see Table 3). Speech from politicians was taken from broadcast interviews, press conferences, statements, parliamentary debates and hearings in public contexts. In the case of the former President, we also analyzed radio speech from an informal interview, as well as her acceptance speech. Material from the non-politicians came from radio interviews conducted with a wide range of Murcian citizens. The politicians were all middle-class professionals, with occupations such as school and university teachers, managers and bank clerks; the non-politicians made up a more diverse group in the lower-middle and upper working classes, whose professions involved both non-manual and skilled labour (e.g. typists and other office workers, foremen and taxi drivers). Generally, the middle-class speakers have a better command of standard Castilian Spanish while also controlling the Murcian variety for use in particular stylistic contexts.

Table 3. General characteristics

<table>
<tr><th>Type of informant</th><th>Discourse genres in public contexts</th><th>Status</th><th>Goals</th></tr>
<tr><td>Female Murcian politician: President of the Murcia Region</td><td>Informal interviews
Press conferences
Parliamentary debates
Investiture discourse
Statements
Hearings</td><td rowspan="4">Middle-class professions</td><td rowspan="4">Adversarial discourse: persuasive, reasoned</td></tr>
<tr><td>Other female Murcian politicians</td><td rowspan="3">Broadcast interviews
Press conferences
Statements
Parliamentary debates
Hearings</td></tr>
<tr><td>Male Murcian politicians (middle class)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Male non-Murcian Politicians</td></tr>
<tr><td>Male Murcian non-politicians (lower-middle/ upper-working class)</td><td>Radio interviews</td><td>Lower-middle/ upper-working classes</td><td>Non-adversarial discourse: non-persuasive, narrative/ descriptive</td></tr>
</table>

Through well-reasoned views and thoughtful positions, politicians in democratic systems must prove to the voters that they are the most credible, most logically and emotionally congruent, and thus that they have the best solutions to problems in society (see Fairclough 1989, 1998, Joseph & Taylor 1990, Wilson 1990, Drew & Heritage 1992, Hodge & Kress 1993, Beard 1999, Nunberg 2001, 2004, Chilton 2003, Koester 2004, Charteris-Black 2006). Accordingly, in their radio speeches, politicians are more adversarial than in normal circumstances: their discourse is designed to achieve specific political goals and persuade their listeners to believe certain things. On the other hand, the main goal of non-politicians in their interviews is not typically persuasion, and they simply use narrative or descriptive discourse as they tell their own stories (which tend to be conversation-like, information-based, fact finding and entertaining). In addition, a radio interview on politics, for example, is a genre in which all participants are actively complicit in the adversarial nature of the interaction. In radio

interviews, therefore, the discourse of politicians and that of non-politicians differ in terms of goals and orientation.[6]

2.2. Linguistic variables

Linguistically, the Spanish spoken in Murcia is a transition dialect (see Zamora-Vicente 1989), predominantly southern, but sharing features with Valencian, Catalan, Castilian and Aragonese, as well as with Andalusian Spanish. Murcian Spanish, like Andalusian, can thus best be considered a southward outgrowth of the varieties originating in the central north of the Iberian Peninsula (see Lapesa 1988, Zamora-Vicente 1989, Alvar 1996, Gómez-Ortín 2004; see also Hernández-Campoy 2004 for a full description and Monroy-Casas 2002 for a supra-segmental description of the Murcian dialect).

Although our analysis focuses on consonant features, it is important to note that Murcian Spanish has a vowel system with eight distinctive sounds. The vowels /ɛ/, /ɔ/ and /æ/ are the result of (i) the historic loss of word-final consonants after /e/, /o/ and /a/, respectively, with the exception of /a/ preceding deleted /d/, as in the pronunciation of *verdad* 'truth' as [berˈða], and (ii) assimilation of word-internal consonant clusters (see Hernández-Campoy & Trudgill 2002).

/i/ /u/
/e/ /o/
/ɛ/ /ɔ/
/æ/ /a/

There is vowel harmony with /ɛ/, /ɔ/ and /æ/, and the occurrence of these vowels at any point in a word prohibits /e/, /o/ and /a/, respectively, in any preceding syllable, with the exception of close vowels /i, u/ (Hernández-Campoy & Trudgill 2002). A word such as *mañanas* is therefore pronounced as /mæˈɲænæ/ rather than /maˈɲanas/.

Sociolinguistically, Murcian has traditionally been associated with the farmers working in the fertile plains irrigated by the River Segura, which runs through the heart of the region. Thus the dialect is stereotyped as *el habla de la huerta* ('the orchard pronunciation') with connotations of rurality and 'bad speech', even by Murcians themselves (see Sánchez-López 1999, 2004). Because

[6] In fact, usually the more adversarial speakers are, the less energy they have to spend on the cosmetics of maintaining a prestige set of allophones (David Britain and Malcah Yaeger-Dror, personal communication).

of this stigmatisation there is a tendency for Murcian speakers to use the prestigious Castilian variety in cases of inter-dialect contact and also in formal public appearances.

However, the dialect also carries covert prestige (Jiménez-Cano 2001, 2004), and so Murcians do not abandon it entirely. In fact, they may embrace dialect forms even in formal situations, capitalising on their ideas of local identity and solidarity. So, as is the case with many vernacular speech communities, Murcians have something of a love–hate relationship with their local dialect.

In the light of these characteristics, the variables examined in this study – all of them consonantal features – are intended to be both linguistically and sociolinguistically representative of the local dialect. They are the following:

(1) *Word-final postvocalic /s/ deletion*
A prominent feature of the Murcian accent is the deletion of word-final postvocalic <s>. It is deleted irrespective of the preceding vowel (as in *mesas* 'tables', *lunes* 'Mondays', *tesis* 'dissertation', *gatos* 'cats' and *autobús* 'bus') and of the following segment (consonant or vowel: *las miras* '(you) look at them' – *las iras* 'the anger'). This variation provides us with two possibilities for words such as *casas* 'houses':

Variant /s/:	Castilian pronunciation (standard)	['kasas]
Variant Ø:	Murcian pronunciation (non-standard)	['kasa]

(2) *Word-internal postvocalic /s/ assimilation*
Another prominent feature of the Murcian accent is the regressive assimilation in the pronunciation of the grapheme ⟨s⟩ in word-internal postvocalic position. This regressive assimilation takes place irrespective of the preceding vowel or following consonant (as in *canasta* 'basket', *desde* 'since', *mismo* 'self', *Oscar*, and *usted* 'you'). This variation provides us with two possibilities for words like *canasta* 'basket':

Variant /s/:	Castilian pronunciation (standard)	[ka'nasta]
Variant Ø:	Murcian pronunciation (non-standard)	[kæ'nættæ]

(3) *Word-final postvocalic /r/ deletion*
A third Murcian feature is the deletion in pronunciation of the grapheme ⟨r⟩ in word-final postvocalic position. This happens irrespective of the preceding vowel (as in *ladrar* 'bark', *comer* 'eat', *subir* 'climb', *primor* 'beauty', or *albur* 'chance') and of what follows (consonant or vowel: *llegar antes* 'to arrive earlier' – *llegar después* 'to arrive later'). It provides us with two possibilities for words like *comer* 'to eat':

Variant /r/: Castilian pronunciation (standard) [koˈmer]
Variant Ø: Murcian pronunciation (non-standard) [kɔˈmɛ]

(4) *Word-final postvocalic /l/ deletion*
Another feature in our study is the variable deletion of word-final postvocalic ⟨l⟩. It takes place irrespective of the preceding vowel (as in *canal* 'channel', *papel* 'paper', *alguacil* 'bailiff', *sol* 'sun', or *baúl* 'chest') and what follows (consonant or vowel: *el coche* 'the car' –*el agua* 'the water'). There are then two possibilities for words like *canal* 'channel':

Variant /l/: Castilian pronunciation (standard) [kaˈnal]
Variant Ø: Murcian pronunciation (non-standard) [kæˈnæ]

(5) *Intervocalic /d/ deletion*
Deletion of intervocalic /d/ usually occurs in words ending with the sequences *-ado/ada* and *-ido/ida*, such as past participles. This variation produces two possibilities for words like *comido* 'eaten'.

Variant /ð/: Castilian pronunciation (standard) [koˈmiðo]
Variant Ø: Murcian pronunciation (non-standard) [koˈmio]

(6) *Intervocalic /r/ deletion in the word* para *('for', 'in order to')*

Variant /ɾ/: Castilian pronunciation (standard) [ˈpaɾa]
Variant Ø: Murcian pronunciation (non-standard) [pa]

This deletion of intervocalic /r/ in *para* is a widespread phenomenon also in casual speech in other varieties of Iberian Spanish, where it is subject to both social and stylistic variation, with the deliberate conscious use of the standard variant (full form) in formal contexts. In Murcia it is also a marker of prestige, though its deletion is both stylistically and socially more extensive: the non-standard variant is consistently much more frequently found in formal situations and more embedded in the upper classes in Murcia than in Old Castile.

(7) *Other consonant assimilations*
Other word-internal consonant regressive assimilations of consonant clusters, such as *-ds-* (*adscribir* 'ascribe'), *-bs-* (*substracción* 'subtraction/theft'), *-ks-* (*exponente* 'exponent'), *-rs-* (*intersticio* 'interstice'), *-ns-* (*constar* 'to state'), *-st-* (*canasta* 'basket'), *-sk-* (*esquimal* 'Eskimo'), *-rn-* (*carne* 'meat'), *-rl-* (*Carlos* 'Charles'), *-kt-* (*contacto* 'contact'), *-dk-* (*adquirir* 'to acquire'), and *-gd-* (*magdalena* 'fairy cake'):

carnet ('card'/'licence'):	standard Castilian Spanish:	[kaɾ'net]
	Murcian Spanish:	[kæ'nnɛ]
tacto ('tact'/'sense'):	standard Castilian Spanish:	['takto]
	Murcian Spanish:	['tætto]
adquirir ('buy'/'acquire'):	standard Castilian Spanish:	[adki'ɾiɾ]
	Murcian Spanish:	[ækki'ɾi]
magdalena ('fairy cake'):	standard Castilian Spanish:	[maɣda'lena]
	Murcian Spanish:	[mædda'lena]

Similar consonant clusters in word-final postvocalic position, such as *-ts* (*chalets* 'houses', *hábitats*), *-ps* (*bíceps*, *tríceps*, *pubs*, *stops*), *-ks* (*tórax* 'thorax', *coñacs* 'brandies', *anoraks*), *-nk* (*cinc* 'zinc'), *-lz* (*selz* 'seltzer'), *-gs* (*zigzags*), and *-ms* (*álbums*), are not assimilated, but rather dropped as any other single consonant in that position (Hernández-Campoy & Trudgill 2002).

(8) *Consonant permutation*
The liquid consonants (/l/ and /r/) are exchanged in speech, which is condemned as vulgar Spanish and often associated with uneducated speakers. Whereas the change of /l/ into /r/ mostly occurs in word-medial position, the opposite process (/r/ > /l/) takes place in word-final position:

l > r:	*algo* > *a**r**go*	*alta* > *a**r**ta*	*baldosa* > *ba**r**dosa*	*faltar* > *fa**r**tar*
	something	high	floor tile	lack/break one's word
r > l:	*comer* > *come**l***	*olor* > *olo**l***	*amor* > *amo**l***	*mujer* > *muje**l***
	to eat	smell	love	woman

Some minimal pairs become homophonous when this non-standard sound change occurs: *mal* 'bad'–*mar* 'sea'; *cardo* 'thistle'–*caldo* 'soup'; *harta* 'fed up'–*alta* 'high'; *cerda* 'sow'–*celda* 'cell'; *sirven* 'they serve'–*silben* 'they whistle'; *abril* 'April'–*abrir* 'to open', etc.

3. Results and analysis

The results of our quantitative analysis of the use of standard Castilian vs. Murcian variants for the eight variables for each speaker group and for the former President are given in Tables 4 to 6 and in Figure 1.

Table 4. Standard scores per group

Variable	Informants				
	Murcian				Non-Murcian
	Female		Male		
	President	Politician informants	Politicians	Non-politicians	
	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
Word-final postvocalic /r/ retention	85% 194/228	100% 72/72	99.6% 277/278	96.4% 191/198	100% 286/286
Word-final postvocalic /l/ retention	74% 94/127	100% 49/49	99.3% 156/157	98.8% 87/88	100% 108/108
Intervocalic /r/ retention (*para*)	100% 22/22	100% 7/7	100% 15/15	100% 21/21	100% 25/25
No consonant permutation	100% 385/385	100% 121/121	100% 433/433	100% 278/278	100% 394/394
Intervocalic /d/ retention	84.2% 85/101	75.59% 34/45	93% 103/111	78.7% 85/108	95.5% 64/67
Word-final postvocalic /s/ retention	7.1% 36/506	75.8% 144/190	45.1% 224/496	31.3% 139/444	100% 338/338
No word-internal post-vocalic /s/ assimilation	5.6% 9/162	57.1% 40/70	35.4% 56/158	17% 21/123	100% 195/195
No consonant assimilation	6.8% 11/162	44% 22/50	58.2% 71/122	26% 26/100	96% 97/101
Total	49.4% 836/1693	81% 489/604	75.4% 1335/1770	62.3% 848/1360	99.5% 1507/1514

Regarding variables, in the first half of Table 4 we see the pooled results for variables 3, 4, 6 and 8 for the former President and each of the other speaker groups. All groups show nearly invariant use of standard rather than dialect forms for each of these variables. In contrast, the second half of Table 4 shows that the standard variant of intervocalic /d/ is used a bit less often and that of the remaining three variables much less. This holds for all groups except for the non-Murcian politicians, with a few exceptions for particular features.

Given the prestige of standard Castilian vis-à-vis the Murcian dialect, it is not surprising that speakers use mostly standard variants for four of the eight variables examined. How, though, do we explain the fact that they do not tend

to avoid other stigmatised forms, especially word-final postvocalic /s/ deletion, word-internal postvocalic /s/ assimilation and consonant assimilation? Part of the explanation seems to be that these features are long-standing southern features which are deeply rooted in the Murcian speech community and are an integral part of local Murcian identity (see Hernández-Campoy & Jiménez-Cano 2003). But we cannot ignore the role of linguistic factors along with social ones. If Murcian speakers were to re-introduce postvocalic /s/ and non-assimilated consonants in clusters, then the /ae/, /ɛ/ and /ɔ/ vowels – which currently occur in environments of /s/ deletion and assimilated clusters – would probably be subject to change and would perhaps even revert to their historic form, causing the eight-vowel system to collapse back into a five-vowel system (see Hernández-Campoy & Trudgill 2002). And certainly the re-introduction of /s/ would result in morphosyntactic change, since currently some important morphosyntactic distinctions, such as plurality and person, are marked with vowel quality in spoken Murcian Spanish, not with *-s* endings. The reluctance of speakers to adopt the standard variants of these three variables in even quite formal styles such as radio speech is mirrored in the relative slowness with which the Castilian variants are diffusing diachronically into the Murcian region in general when compared with other features such as the re-introduction of word-final postvocalic /r/ and /l/ (see Hernández-Campoy 2003a, 2003b; Hernández-Campoy & Jiménez-Cano 2003).

The standard form of intervocalic /d/ appears in an intermediately high position for all the Murcian speaker groups. Studies show that the null variant (see Section 2.2) is becoming increasingly widespread in the casual speech of peninsular Spanish (see Narbona, Cano & Morillo 1998: 176), but it is subject to both social and stylistic variation, with the deliberate use of the standard variant in formal contexts (see Williams 1987, Penny 1991, 2000). In other words, the standard variant seems to have become an overt marker of formal speech in much of Spain, and so is more likely to be adopted by Murcians in relatively formal broadcast settings.

As to groups, Table 4 also shows total usage levels for each speaker group. These too are shown in graphical form in Figure 1. Like the variables, each speaker group also shows different degrees of convergence with standard Castilian Spanish: Group 1, the Murcian former President, has 49.4% standard usage; Group 2, Murcian female politicians, has 81%; Group 3, Murcian male politicians, has 75.4%; Group 4, Murcian male non-politicians, has 62.3%; and Group 5, non-Murcian male politicians, shows 99.5% standard usage. These differing percentages derive mostly from the three most prominent local variables which are difficult to standardise: word-final postvocalic /s/ deletion and

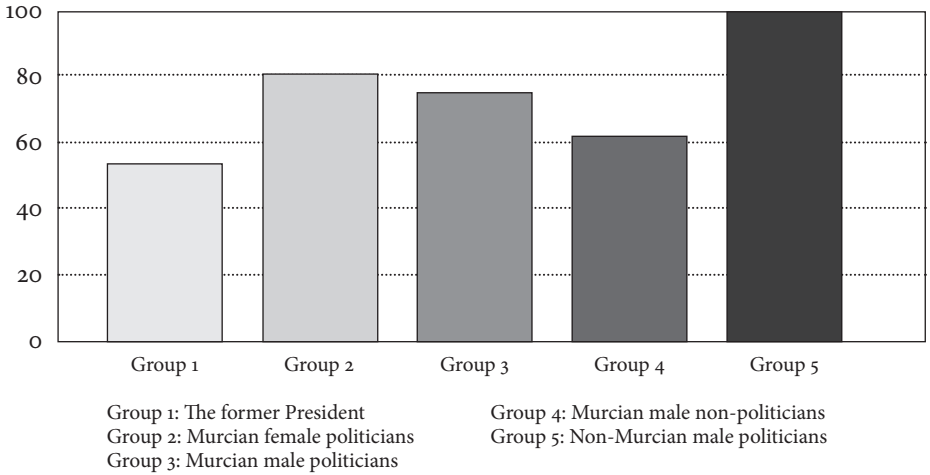

Figure 1. Total usage levels for standard Castilian variants by speaker group (data from Table 4)

word-internal postvocalic /s/ assimilation, and consonant assimilation. For obvious reasons, Group 5 has the highest score for standard usage: it consists of non-Murcian politicians who speak standard Castilian Spanish. The only variables with any room for variability in this group are intervocalic /d/ deletion, which we have already noted is spreading throughout Peninsular Spanish, and consonant assimilation. Research indicates that the latter feature is in the process of expansion in northern regions of Spain which are chiefly standard Castilian Spanish-speaking areas (see Martínez-Martín 1983).

Groups 2, 3 and 4 are in an intermediate position, with their percentage of usage of standard features ranging from 62.3 per cent to 81 per cent. Not surprisingly, the middle-class politicians who comprise Groups 2 and 3 show higher usage levels for the standard features than the lower-middle and upper-working class non-manual and skilled labourers comprising Group 4. This is because the politicians most likely have greater awareness of the social significance of linguistic variables as well as greater control over standard Castilian forms. Further, as we noted earlier, the politicians probably have greater motivation for using standard forms in broadcast speech since they are almost always trying to be persuasive, a goal often best accomplished by using speech which is as 'correct' and 'educated' as possible.

The surprising finding is that the former President does not show the same high usage levels for standard features as other female politicians. Instead, she has lower scores than any of the other groups, including male politicians and even male non-politicians of lower social class groups. She thus violates expectations not only for occupation and social class but also for gender, since it is often shown, or believed, that women's speech is more standard than that of men (see Trudgill 1972 and Milroy & Milroy 1985, 1993). Further, the former President violates our stylistic expectations (see Cutillas-Espinosa & Hernández Campoy 2006, 2007). In Table 5 (see next page) we can see the President's usage levels for the first four variables across the five different speech events we examined: word-final postvocalic /r/ retention, word-final postvocalic /l/ retention, intervocalic /r/ retention and no consonant permutation. Two of these contexts are comparatively informal events: a radio interview and a press conference; the other three are more formal events: two parliamentary debates and the highly formal situation of the President's inauguration (investiture ceremony). As with the other speaker groups, we again see near-categorical usage for these four features, except for only 5 per cent post-vocalic /l/ in the most formal context, the investiture speech.

Table 5 also shows the President's usage levels for the features with more variability. Again, we see relatively high use of the standard intervocalic /d/ pronunciation and low usage for the standard variants for the variables word-final postvocalic /s/ retention, word-internal postvocalic /s/ assimilation and consonant permutation, even in the formal investiture speech and Parliamentary debates. In fact, looking at the President's total standard usage in each speech event, we see that while overall she is slightly more standard in the formal contexts than in the informal situations, at 54.3 per cent vs. 52.1 per cent,[7] quite unexpectedly, her least standard speech is in the most formal context, the investiture. The analysis of her speech in this most formal context shows the presence of some level of non-standardness for word-final postvocalic /r/ and /l/, features that, according to Hernández-Campoy & Jiménez-Cano (2003), had already disappeared in the 1980s or were about to in the early 1990s. This non-standard

[7] This difference is not statistically significant when all variables are considered, including those that are realised nearly categorically standardly (for standard vs. non-standard variants in the President's public speech in Murcia in less formal vs. formal contexts, $\chi^2 = 2.40$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.121$). However, when only the three variables least prone to standardisation are considered (i.e. the last three listed on each table), the difference in public informal vs. formal contexts *is* statistically significant: $\chi^2 = 3.93$; $df = 1$; $p = 0.048$.

Table 5. Murcian former President's scores: Group 1

Variable	Formal			Informal				
	Interview 1995	Press conference 1995	Subtotal	Investiture discourse 1993	Parliamentary debate 1994	Parliamentary debate 1996	Subtotal	Total
Word-final postvocalic /r/ retention	100%	97.7%	98.7%	95%	11.8%	100%	78.3%	85%
	33/33	42/43	75/76	56/59	4/34	59/59	119/152	194/228
Word-final postvocalic /l/ retention	100%	100%	100%	8.8%	96.8%	96.4%	64.5%	74%
	18/18	16/16	34/34	3/34	30/31	27/28	60/93	94/127
Intervocalic /r/ retention (*para*)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	4/4	4/4	8/8	7/7	5/5	2/2	14/14	22/22
No consonant permutation	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	51/51	58/58	109/109	87/87	103/103	86/86	276/276	385/385
Intervocalic /d/ retention	72%	75%	73.2%	100%	84.8%	100%	91.7%	84.2%
	18/25	12/16	30/41	19/19	28/33	8/8	55/60	85/101
Word-final postvocalic /s/ retention	7.5%	12%	9.7%	8.3%	3.7%	4%	5.8%	7.1%
	7/93	10/83	17/176	12/145	4/109	3/76	19/330	36/506
No word-internal postvocalic /s/ assimilation	12.5%	0%	3.6%	10.7%	0%	3.3%	6.5%	5.6%
	2/16	0/39	2/55	6/56	0/21	1/30	7/107	9/162
No consonant assimilation	21.7%	5.9%	15%	0%	4.2%	9.7%	4.1%	6.8%
	5/23	1/17	6/40	0/43	2/48	3/31	5/122	11/162
TOTAL	52.5%	51.8%	52.1%	42.2%	45.8%	59%	48.1%	49.4%
	138/263	143/276	281/539	190/450	176/384	189/320	555/1154	836/1693

behaviour favouring the use of these extinct local features differs from her categorical standard use of a salient marker such as intervocalic /d/ (100% St). This situation may be understood as a phenomenon of hypervernacularisation, rather than hyperdialectism.

So how do we account for this speaker's unexpected patterns of stylistic variation across contexts of different levels of formality? And how do we also explain her overall low usage of standard variants in radio broadcasts as hypervernacular behaviour? Obviously, it is not a matter of access to the standard, since her educational and career backgrounds necessitated contact and familiarity with standard Castilian. She is a labour-relations lawyer, and she used to have regular meetings in Madrid with the other members of the Executive Board of her political party – the left-wing Socialist Party – and with Government in general.

We also cannot really say that her stylistic choices are a matter of audience design, at least in a straightforward sense. Seemingly, her speech is even less standard than that of her constituency, as evidenced in the fact that she has lower scores than even the Murcian male non-politicians. And even if we agree that audience design does not have to do simply with talking like your audience but rather in a way that pleases them and/or meets their expectations, we cannot say that this is necessarily what the President is doing either. In fact, her unexpected use of Murcian features caused quite a bit of controversy and debate in the local community and in local and national newspapers (see e.g. *La Verdad* 21 Apr. 1993; *La Opinión* 26 Feb. 1994 and 11 Mar. 1994; *El País* 23 May 1995).

Instead, it seems that this hypervernacular speaker is being proactive rather than reactive and is quite purposefully using local Murcian features to achieve a particular effect. Local features are very much associated with the working class world and with progressive ideas. The use of these local features as an exercise of hypervernacularisation might be a strategy to build a particular image and to project her socialist identity in the particular political context in which she operates. In contrast, the use of standard features may be associated with conservative ideas and the accent of the bourgeoisie. In fact, if we examine the individual scores for the other female Murcian politicians (see Table 6 on the next page) we see that the two most progressive politicians, Informants 1 and 2 – both of whom are also members of the left-wing Socialist Party – show somewhat lower scores for standard variants (68%, 88.2%) than the other woman, Informant 3, who is a member of the right-wing Conservative Party (*Partido Popular*), and who shows nearly categorical standard usage.

President Martínez uses the phonological system of Murcian Spanish perfectly well, without overgeneration of non-standard forms. That is why we sug-

Table 6. Female politicians contrast: Group 1-Group 2, 1990–2000

Variable	Group 2 (3 informants)				Group 1 (1 inf.: President)
	Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Total	
Word-final postvocalic /r/ retention	100%	100%	100%	100%	85%
	30/30	18/18	24/24	72/72	194/228
Word-final postvocalic /l/ retention	100%	100%	100%	100%	74%
	35/35	5/5	9/9	49/49	94/127
Intervocalic /r/ retention (*para*)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	3/3	2/2	2/2	7/7	22/22
No consonant permutation	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	65/65	23/23	33/33	121/121	385/385
Intervocalic /d/ retention	60%	40%	100%	75.59%	84.2%
	12/20	2/5	20/20	34/45	85/101
Word-final postvocalic /s/ retention	52.3%	86.5%	100%	75.8%	7.1%
	45/86	32/37	67/67	144/190	36/506
No word-internal postvocalic /s/ assimilation	34%	85.7%	100%	57.1%	5.6%
	15/44	6/7	19/19	40/70	9/162
No consonant assimilation	28.1%	40%	84.6%	44%	6.8%
	9/32	2/5	11/13	22/50	11/162
Total	68%	88.2%	98.9%	81%	49.4%
	214/315	90/102	185/187	489/604	836/1693

gest that her speech is hypervernacular, in the sense that it differs strikingly from that of her social class and gender. Her use of the non-standard speech marks an attempt to project downward social mobility, which is certainly surprising in a world where, as María Antonia Martínez remarked, "everyone wants to be more. I just want to be different". In María Antonia Martínez, the prestige of working-class values is personal, ideological and overt. If language shows our aspirations, certainly President Martínez is committed to the idea that it is possible to preserve a working-class identity in spite of the fact that one's occupation and social position can no longer be identified with that social group.

4. Conclusion

In dialect contact situations, hyperdialectism and hypervernacularisation are both forms of hyperadaptation. The former consists in the use of incorrect overgeneralised forms in non-standard dialects due to misanalysis or to excessive efforts at showing vernacular identity. Hypervernacularisation, on the other hand, involves the correct use of non-standard forms, which prove however inappropriate according to socio-demographic and/or stylistic criteria. This article has examined one specific instance of hypervernacularisation, namely the unexpected use of vernacular forms by an upper-class speaker (a female former President of one of the autonomous regions in Spain) in non-informal contexts. The analysis has shown that her speech behaviour looks like an attempt to project downward social mobility and a working-class image for some specific purposes. Her hypervernacular use of Murcian dialect features indicates that she is not shifting her speech in reaction to formality, or even to accommodate the many Murcians in her audience (whose radio speech is more standard than her own). Rather, she breaks free from any conventional sociolinguistic patterns and uses dialect features to project a persona in pursuit of her political goals and a very particular image – namely, her working-class background shaping her identity. Thus, she designs her speech to highlight her Murcian identity and socialist ideals.

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