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Language Style in Sabrina Carpenter's Interview on the Apple Music Youtube Channel : A sociolinguistic study

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Abstract. This study investigates the language styles used by Sabrina Carpenter in her interview with Zane Lowe on the Apple Music YouTube channel and examines how those styles reflect her identity. The study applies a descriptive qualitative approach. Sabrina Carpenter's utterances in the 53-minute-and-5-second interview were transcribed, identified, coded, and classified using William Labov's (1972) language-style framework, while Janet Holmes's (2013) sociolinguistic perspective was used to interpret the relationship between language and identity. The findings show 100 relevant data consisting of 92 casual-style utterances and 8 careful-style utterances. Reading style, word-list style, and minimal-pairs style were not found because the interview did not involve controlled reading or elicitation tasks. Casual style was characterized by spontaneous responses, short utterances, interjections, discourse markers, humor, contractions, emotional expressions, and incomplete structures. Careful style appeared when Carpenter gave more deliberate, coherent, reflective, and interactionally managed responses. The dominance of casual style indicates that Carpenter generally communicates in a relaxed and natural manner. Her linguistic choices construct an identity that is relatable, authentic, expressive, friendly, and socially engaging, while careful style additionally presents her as reflective and attentive to interaction. The study demonstrates that language style functions not only as linguistic variation but also as a resource for identity construction in digital media interviews.

Keywords: **Language Style, Identity, Sociolinguistics, Sabrina Carpenter.**

INTRODUCTION

Language variation is an important phenomenon in sociolinguistics because speakers may use different language forms depending on the social and communicative context. Labov (1972) explains that speakers control various language styles and may adjust their speech according to the degree of attention given to language. Similarly, Holmes (2013) states that language use is influenced by social context and can reflect relationships, attitudes, and identity. In digital media, language style is particularly important because public figures communicate directly with interviewers while simultaneously reaching a wider audience. Sabrina Carpenter's interview with Zane Lowe on the Apple Music YouTube channel presents this phenomenon because the interaction combines professional discussion with relaxed and spontaneous conversation.

Previous studies have examined language styles in films and digital media. Effendi and Sugiharti (2023) analyze language style in *Mulan*, while Sitepu et al. (2023) examine language style in YouTube content. Silta et al. (2023) find that casual style frequently occurs in relaxed interactions, whereas Wisesa et al. (2024) show that communication context influences stylistic choices. However, previous studies mainly focus on classifying language styles based on levels of formality and often apply Joos's theory. Limited attention is given to the relationship between stylistic variation and identity in celebrity interviews on digital media. Therefore, this study applies Labov's (1972) theory to identify language styles and Holmes's (2013) perspective to explain how linguistic choices reflect identity.

This study focuses on two research problems: the types of language styles used by Sabrina Carpenter in her Apple Music YouTube interview and how these language styles reflect her identity in the interview with Zane Lowe. The study aims to identify and classify Sabrina Carpenter's language styles and to analyze how her linguistic choices reflect her identity in digital public communication. The findings are expected to show that language style functions not only as linguistic variation but also as a resource for constructing identity.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design because it focuses on identifying and interpreting language styles in spoken interaction. The research subject is Sabrina Carpenter, while the data source is the Apple Music YouTube interview entitled *Sabrina Carpenter: Short n' Sweet, Songwriting & "Espresso"*, which has a duration of 53 minutes and 5 seconds. The primary data consist of Sabrina Carpenter's verbal utterances, while Zane Lowe's utterances are considered only as interactional context. The researcher acts as the primary instrument in collecting, classifying, and interpreting the data.

The data are collected by watching the interview several times, transcribing Sabrina Carpenter's utterances, checking the transcript against the original video, identifying relevant utterances, and organizing the data in a data sheet. The data are classified using Labov's (1972) language-style categories: casual style, careful style, reading style, word-list style, and minimal-pairs style. The classified data are then interpreted using Holmes's (2013) perspective on language and identity. Data validity is maintained through repeated observation and transcript checking before conclusions are drawn based on the research questions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Finding

The analysis identifies 100 utterances relevant to language-style classification. Based on Labov's (1972) theory, two types of language style occur in Sabrina Carpenter's speech: casual style and careful style. Casual style occurs in 92 utterances, while careful style occurs in 8 utterances. Reading style, word-list style, and minimal-pairs style are not found in the data. The results show that casual style is the dominant language style used by Sabrina Carpenter in the interview.

Tabel 1 frequency of language style used by sabrina carpenter

Types of language Style	Frequency	Percentage
Casual Style	92	92%

Careful Style	8	8%
Reading Style	0	0%
Minimal pair style	0	0%
Word list	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Table 1 shows a considerable difference between the frequency of casual style and careful style. Casual style represents 92% of the data, whereas careful style represents 8%. The other three styles are not identified because the interview does not require Sabrina Carpenter to read a text, pronounce isolated words, or produce contrasting word pairs. These activities are commonly associated with the more controlled speech situations in Labov's stylistic framework. The interview instead consists primarily of spontaneous conversation between Sabrina Carpenter and Zane Lowe.

Discussion

3.2.1 Casual Style

Casual style is the most dominant language style in the interview. The 92 casual-style utterances are generally characterized by spontaneous responses, short expressions, interjections, discourse markers, humor, emotional expressions, and informal linguistic structures. These characteristics indicate that Sabrina frequently gives relatively limited attention to formal speech organization and focuses on immediate interaction.

Data C1

SC: "Oh my God, what's happening? Oh no."

The utterance occurs when Sabrina Carpenter responds to Zane Lowe's introduction and praise. The expression "Oh my God" functions as an interjection that indicates surprise, while "what's happening?" expresses confusion rather than functioning as a literal request for information. The final expression "Oh no" strengthens the spontaneous emotional reaction. The utterance demonstrates casual style because it is produced immediately and does not show careful linguistic planning. Its fragmented structure and emotional interjections indicate that Sabrina focuses on responding to the interaction rather than monitoring formal sentence construction. This finding supports Labov's (1972) concept that casual speech emerges when speakers give less attention to the formal characteristics of their speech.

The utterance also reflects Sabrina Carpenter's identity as an expressive and authentic public figure. Instead of responding to the praise through a highly controlled or formal statement, she openly communicates surprise. Holmes (2013) explains that linguistic choices contribute to the way speakers position themselves in social interaction. Sabrina's spontaneous reaction reduces social distance and constructs an impression of naturalness and emotional openness.

Data C6

SC : "**I have none, so I'll just use voice."**

This utterance is delivered humorously after Zane Lowe makes a light-hearted remark during the interview. Instead of producing a formal explanation, Sabrina immediately responds with a playful statement that reflects spontaneous conversation. According to Labov (1972), casual style often includes simple sentence structures and humorous expressions because speakers prioritize communication rather than grammatical precision. Sabrina's utterance illustrates these characteristics through its uncomplicated structure and conversational tone. The humor contained in the expression

also contributes to maintaining the relaxed atmosphere of the interview. Holmes (2013) explains that speakers negotiate identity through interaction. In this case, Sabrina's humorous response positions her as a cooperative conversational partner who actively contributes to the interaction. Rather than presenting herself as distant or formal, she creates solidarity with the interviewer by participating in the shared humor of the conversation.

Data C9

SC: "Totally."

The word "Totally" is a short response used to express strong agreement with Zane Lowe's statement. Sabrina does not provide a complete or elaborated sentence because the shared conversational context makes additional explanation unnecessary. This utterance is categorized as casual style because it reflects everyday informal communication. The use of a one-word response demonstrates spontaneity and conversational efficiency. Sabrina appears comfortable with the interaction and does not maintain rigid formal language. The utterance also contributes to Sabrina's identity as a relaxed and socially engaged speaker. The informal response reduces interpersonal distance and creates a sense of familiarity with the interviewer. Holmes (2013) explains that informal language may communicate social closeness and solidarity. Therefore, the use of "Totally" reinforces Sabrina's relatable public identity.

Data C17

SC : **"Well."**

This categorized as casual style because it functions as a discourse marker before Sabrina continues her explanation. Rather than answering immediately, she uses this expression to organize her thoughts while maintaining her speaking turn. According to Labov (1972), discourse markers frequently occur in casual conversations because speakers formulate ideas while speaking. The word *"Well"* does not introduce new information but instead serves as a conversational strategy that allows Sabrina to prepare her response naturally. Holmes (2013) suggests that identity emerges through interactional behavior. Sabrina's use of this discourse marker reflects her identity as an active conversational participant who carefully manages the flow of discussion without interrupting the interaction.

Data C23

SC : "**"You know, maybe both."**

This illustrates casual style through the use of the discourse marker *"you know"* and the hedging expression *"maybe."* Instead of presenting a definite answer, Sabrina expresses her opinion in a flexible and conversational manner. Labov (1972) explains that casual style allows speakers to communicate naturally without emphasizing linguistic accuracy. The expression *"you know"* invites shared understanding, while *"maybe both"* indicates openness rather than certainty. These characteristics are commonly associated with spontaneous spoken interaction. According to Holmes (2013), speakers construct identity by positioning themselves within interaction. Sabrina's utterance presents her as cooperative and open-minded because she negotiates meaning with the interviewer instead of imposing a fixed opinion. Consequently, the utterance reflects an identity that values collaboration and conversational engagement.

Data C32

SC : "**Whiskey feels right for that song"**

The utterance is categorized as casual style because Sabrina Carpenter responds briefly and spontaneously to Zane Lowe's association between whiskey and the mood of

the song. Rather than providing a detailed explanation, she expresses her personal impression using the simple phrase *"feels right,"* which reflects intuition rather than careful analysis. According to Labov (1972), casual style is characterized by minimal attention to linguistic form and greater focus on natural communication. The short sentence and conversational tone indicate that Sabrina prioritizes maintaining the flow of interaction. From Holmes' (2013) perspective, this utterance also reflects identity construction, as Sabrina positions herself as an artist who actively participates in interpreting the meaning and atmosphere of her own music through collaborative interaction with the interviewer.

Data C37

SC : "It's where Espresso came from, yeah. Stupid little song."

The utterance is classified as casual style because it combines a simple confirmation with humorous and informal language. The expression *"stupid little song"* is not intended as criticism but as a playful remark about one of her successful songs. Labov (1972) explains that casual style is characterized by spontaneous, informal, and emotionally driven expressions rather than carefully planned language. Through this response, Sabrina maintains the relaxed atmosphere of the interview while discussing her creative work. Holmes (2013) further suggests that such linguistic choices construct identity, as Sabrina positions herself as the songwriter while presenting herself as humble, approachable, and comfortable engaging with the interviewer.

Data C42

SC : **"And blond, and so I'm and sarcastic, and you know, that was all, that was all there**

The utterance is categorized as casual style because it contains discourse markers (*you know*), repetition, and an unstructured sentence, indicating spontaneous speech with little attention to linguistic form. According to Labov (1972), these features are typical of casual style, where speakers focus on expressing ideas naturally rather than producing grammatically polished utterances. From Holmes' (2013) perspective, this utterance also reflects identity construction, as Sabrina reconstructs how she perceived herself during her teenage years. By describing herself as "blond" and "sarcastic," she positions her past identity within the interaction, demonstrating that identity is continuously negotiated through language.

Data C61

SC : **"Rock on, man."**

The utterance is categorized as casual style because it uses the slang expression *"rock on"* and the informal address term *"man,"* both of which are commonly found in everyday conversation. Sabrina responds briefly and spontaneously to express agreement with Zane Lowe's reflection without providing further explanation. According to Labov (1972), casual style is characterized by minimal attention to linguistic formality and greater emphasis on natural communication. From Holmes' (2013) perspective, this utterance also reflects identity construction, as Sabrina positions herself in solidarity with the interviewer through informal language. Her linguistic choice creates a sense of closeness and demonstrates her identity as an approachable and cooperative conversational partner.

Data C79

SC: "Send me a picture."

This utterance is an imperative sentence used by Sabrina to ask Zane Lowe to send a photograph related to his story. Although the utterance is grammatically an imperative,

it does not function as an impolite command because it occurs in a relaxed conversational context. The short and direct structure reflects casual style. Sabrina does not use a more formal expression such as "Would you please send me a picture?" Instead, she uses a direct request that is common in everyday communication. This choice indicates interpersonal closeness and comfort within the conversation. From the perspective of identity, the utterance presents Sabrina as an interactive and friendly communicator. She actively engages with Zane Lowe's story and demonstrates personal interest. The linguistic directness reduces social distance and reinforces her identity as an approachable public figure.

3.2.2 Careful Style

Data CR1

SC : **"…I questioned it until like the day before it came out…"**

The utterance is categorized as careful style because Sabrina Carpenter provides a reflective and well-developed explanation of her creative process rather than a direct answer. She carefully describes her uncertainty about completing the album and uses evaluative expressions such as *"I have a hard time"* to express personal reflection. According to Joos (1967), careful style is characterized by greater attention to speech organization and clarity. From Holmes' (2013) perspective, this utterance also constructs Sabrina's identity as a songwriter who views album production as an ongoing process of self-reflection and artistic development.

Data CR2

SC : **"…I will never forget this album for teaching me so much about myself**

The utterance is classified as careful style because Sabrina develops a thoughtful response that connects intuition, creativity, and personal growth. Instead of giving a brief answer, she explains how the album became a meaningful learning experience. According to Joos (1967), careful style involves organized and reflective speech. Holmes (2013) further suggests that this utterance constructs Sabrina's identity as an artist who understands her creative work as a process of self-discovery rather than merely producing music.

Data CR3

SC : **"…it's becoming scary to allow everything about me to be misunderstood…"**

The utterance represents careful style because Sabrina expresses a complex reflection on public perception using abstract and metaphorical language. The structured explanation demonstrates careful consideration of her words rather than spontaneous expression. According to Joos (1967), careful style is characterized by controlled and reflective speech. Holmes (2013) explains that this utterance constructs Sabrina's identity as a public figure negotiating the relationship between self-representation and audience interpretation.

Data CR4

SC : **"I have three older sisters and I'm the baby… I really count on those friendships to keep me grounded."**

The utterance is categorized as careful style because Sabrina expands a simple factual response into a meaningful reflection on family relationships. Her organized explanation demonstrates careful language use and emotional interpretation. According

to Joos (1967), careful style emphasizes clarity and thoughtful expression. From Holmes' (2013) perspective, the utterance constructs Sabrina's identity through her role within the family and highlights how interpersonal relationships shape her personal identity.

Data CR5

SC : **"There's a really beautiful group of young girls… they still come to every show."**

The utterance is categorized as careful style because Sabrina provides a coherent narrative about her long-term relationship with her fans. Instead of giving a brief response, she explains their loyalty and emotional connection. According to Joos (1967), careful style is reflected in organized and meaningful speech. Holmes (2013) argues that this utterance constructs Sabrina's identity as a performer whose relationship with her audience forms an important part of her social identity.

Data CR6

SC : **"Yeah, so it makes me feel like we're doing this together…"**

The utterance is classified as careful style because Sabrina expands a simple confirmation into a reflection on shared growth with her fans. Her response is coherent, structured, and emphasizes collective experience. According to Joos (1967), careful style involves deliberate organization of ideas. Holmes (2013) further explains that the inclusive pronoun *"we"* constructs Sabrina's identity as an artist who views herself and her audience as participants in the same journey.

Data CR7

SC : **"I think I'm more aware than I know I am… I say no if it feels wrong in my stomach."**

The utterance is categorized as **careful style** because Sabrina carefully explains her decision-making process using reflective and evaluative language. The hedging expression *"I think"* and the metaphorical phrase *"feels wrong in my stomach"* demonstrate thoughtful speech. According to Joos (1967), these features characterize careful style. Holmes (2013) suggests that the utterance constructs Sabrina's identity as someone who relies on self-awareness and personal values when making important decisions.

Data CR8

SC : "**I've been listening to a lot… what's your favorite record right now?"**

The utterance is categorized as careful style because Sabrina maintains a well-structured interaction by extending the conversation and inviting the interviewer to respond. Rather than giving a minimal answer, she manages the flow of the interview strategically. According to Joos (1967), careful style reflects controlled and organized communication. Holmes (2013) explains that this linguistic choice constructs Sabrina's identity as an active participant who collaboratively shapes the interview instead of functioning solely as the interviewee.

3.2.3 The Dominant Language Style Used by Sabrina Carpenter and Its Reflection of Her Identity

The analysis shows that **casual style** is the dominant language style used by Sabrina Carpenter throughout the interview with Zane Lowe. This is reflected in her frequent use of spontaneous expressions, brief responses, interjections, discourse markers, and simple sentence structures. According to Labov (1972), these features indicate a low level of attention to linguistic form, allowing communication to flow

naturally. Representative examples include **"Oh my God, what's happening? Oh no."** (Data C1), which expresses spontaneous surprise; **"Totally."** (Data C9), a brief informal agreement; and **"Send me a picture."** (Data C76), a direct yet friendly imperative. These utterances demonstrate how Sabrina prioritizes natural interaction over formal language use.

The dominance of casual style also reflects Sabrina Carpenter's interactional identity. Through spontaneous and informal language, she minimizes social distance and creates a relaxed, conversational atmosphere rather than maintaining the formal role of a celebrity interviewee. Holmes (2013) argues that identity is constructed through linguistic choices that position speakers in relation to others during interaction. In this interview, Sabrina's consistent use of casual style positions her as approachable, authentic, and collaborative, allowing both the interviewer and the audience to engage with her as an equal conversational partner. Thus, casual style functions not only as her dominant communication style but also as an important linguistic resource for constructing and negotiating her public identity.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the language styles used by Sabrina Carpenter in her interview on the Apple Music YouTube channel and explored how these language styles reflect her identity. The findings reveal that casual style is the dominant language style, accounting for 92 of the 100 identified utterances, while careful style appears in only eight utterances. Casual style is characterized by spontaneous expressions, interjections, brief responses, discourse markers, humor, and simple sentence structures, whereas careful style is reflected in more structured, reflective, and elaborated responses, particularly when discussing personal experiences, creativity, and professional values.

The findings also demonstrate that language style functions not only as a means of communication but also as a resource for identity construction. Consistent with Holmes' (2013) perspective, Sabrina Carpenter constructs different aspects of her identity through her linguistic choices. Her dominant use of casual style presents her as approachable, authentic, and collaborative, reducing the social distance between herself, the interviewer, and the audience. In contrast, careful style highlights her identity as a reflective songwriter and public figure who thoughtfully discusses her creative process, personal growth, and relationships with fans.

Overall, this study confirms that language style is closely related to identity construction in media interviews. The findings contribute to sociolinguistic studies by demonstrating how speakers strategically shift between casual and careful styles to negotiate interpersonal relationships and represent different dimensions of their public identity. Future research may examine language style and identity construction across different interview settings, media platforms, or public figures to provide broader sociolinguistic insights.

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