

# What can you get from a media-sharing website that is of sociolinguistic relevance?

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There is a considerable amount of valuable data – including creole talk – that is available online through YouTube. The data to be discussed here comes from *News Channel 8*, a commercial television station in St. Croix, which broadcasts the newscasts via its YouTube channel.

The Virgin Islands Creole, one of the English-derived creoles of the Eastern Caribbean, is spoken on St. Croix in most informal situations. One would therefore expect an appearance on television, a more formal setting, to produce a standardised variety. However, although the interviewers seem to orient to Standard English, this is not always the case for the interviewees. Instead, in many interviews the Crucians take their private issues to the public and switch to a more local variety. I collected 18 such interviews and created an hour-long corpus of spoken data.

I examined patterns of variation in the Virgin Islands Creole by looking at the nature and frequency of the plural and past marking as well as copula variability. My results lead me to believe that through using YouTube we can identify data that can help us understand the process of standardisation which is happening in the Virgin Islands Creole. This opens up possibilities for further research of the direction of the Virgin Islands Creole development through the use of data available on media-sharing websites like YouTube.

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