

It [English] is everywhere. English is now so widely spoken in so many places that umpteen versions have evolved, some so peculiar that even „native" speakers may have trouble understanding each other. But if only one version existed, that would present difficulties enough. Even everyday English is a language of subtlety, nuance, and complexity. John Simmons, a language consultant for Interbrand, likes to cite the word "set", an apparently simple word that takes on different meaning in a sporting, cooking, social, or mathematical context – and that is before any little words are combined with it. Then, as a verb it becomes "set aside", "set up", "set down", "set in", "set on", "set about", "set against", and so on, terms that "leave even native speakers bewildered about [its] core meaning." Deutsche Welle broadcasts in it. Bjork, an Icelander, sings in it. French business schools teach in it. It is the medium of expression in cabinet meetings in Bolivia.