

FUNCTIONAL SPECIALIZATION OF NEAR-SYNONYMS IN INSTITUTIONAL FRENCH: THE CASE OF METTRE EN ŒUVRE AND METTRE EN PLACE

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INTRODUCTION

- The Challenge of Near-Synonyms
- Specialized Discourse: In institutional, legal, or scientific contexts, word choice is rarely arbitrary. It is systematic and functional.

Institutional Language as a Tool:

- Constructs authority and manages public perception.
- Aims for precision to limit ambiguity.
- Creates a "formulary style" that projects neutrality and objectivity.

Our Focus: Seemingly interchangeable phrases become functional tools with distinct roles.

- How does the French Ministry of Education, in its official discourses, systematically differentiate in utilization between these two expressions (*mettre en oeuvre* and *mettre en place*) through the lenses of semantic preferences and ideational metafunction?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Semantic Preferences

- USAS Tagging Framework (Legallois & François, 2021), (Hauk, Davis, & Pulvermüller, 2022), (Rayson, 2023), (Baker, 2023) (Levinson & Wilkins, 2023) (Smith, Legallois, & François, 2023).
- Probabilistic associations based on language utilization (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) (Tomasello, 2003) (Bergen, 2012) (Xiao, 2022) (Yu, 2022) (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2023) (Divjak, Milin, & Medimorec, 2023) (Hauser & Schwarz, 2023) (Gillings & Mautner, 2024).

> Our Approach: This allows us to build a data-driven "collocational profile" for each phrase, revealing its semantic personality.

Systemic Functional Linguistics (M. A. K. Halliday)

- Language as a Tool for Making Meaning
- Ideational Metafunction
- Transitivity Analysis (Process, Participants, Circumstances)

> Our Approach: We analyze how each phrase functions grammatically to construe a different type of reality. Is the institution 'doing' something (Material Process) or 'being' something (Relational Process)?

METHOD

Corpus Driven (Jakubíček, 2013) (Schaeffer-Lacroix, 2014) (Boulton & Tyne, 2014) (Aurnague, 2022)

- Corpus Source: A large collection of official documents and web pages from the French Ministry of Education website (education.gouv.fr). Corpus Size: 1,210 (53%) instances of *mettre en œuvre* (47%). 1,090 instances of *mettre en place*.

Analytical Approach - A Multi-layered Method

- Collocational Analysis: Identify and categorize the noun that functions as the direct object of each verb phrase.
- Semantic Tagging: Assign a semantic category (e.g., 'Policy', 'Organization', 'Method') to each object to quantify the patterns.
- Transitivity Analysis: Code each clause to determine the grammatical function of the phrase (e.g., Material, Relational process).
- Comparative Synthesis: Directly compare the profiles to delineate their functional opposition.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

TABLE 1. Collocations of 'mettre en œuvre'

L2	L1	Hit	R1	R2
<i>de</i> (91)	<i>être</i> (122)	<i>mettre en œuvre</i>	<i>le</i> (211)	<i>le</i> (137)
<i>le</i> (78)	<i>à</i> (91)		<i>un</i> (103)	<i>un</i> (27)
<i>et</i> (32)	<i>de</i> (83)		<i>de</i> (100)	<i>de</i> (24)
<i>pouvoir</i> (16)	<i>et</i> (70)		<i>dans</i> (68)	<i>politique</i> (23)
<i>concevoir</i> (15)	<i>pour</i> (22)		<i>par</i> (47)	<i>procédure</i> (21)
<i>devoir</i> (15)	<i>moyen</i> (19)		<i>pour</i> (45)	<i>démarche</i> (17)
<i>être</i> (14)	<i>le</i> (18)		<i>au</i> (34)	<i>technique</i> (17)
<i>que</i> (13)	<i>lui</i> (15)		<i>ce</i> (27)	<i>projet</i> (13)
<i>un</i> (11)	<i>il</i> (14)		<i>à</i> (21)	<i>activité</i> (15)
<i>avoir</i> (10)	<i>avoir</i> (13)		<i>et</i> (19)	<i>action</i> (14)

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

TABLE 2. Semantic Distribution and Frequencies of ‘mettre en œuvre’

USAS Category Code	USAS Category Description	Frequency	Percentage of Total
G	Gouvernement et le domaine public	108	25.1%
X	Actions psychologiques, états et processus	95	22.1%
A	Termes généraux et abstraits	76	17.7%
S	Actions sociales, états et processus	41	9.5%
P	Éducation	33	7.7%
O	Substances, matériaux, objets & équipement	24	5.6%
Y	Science & technologie	18	4.2%
I	Argent & commerce	11	2.6%
C	Arts & artisanats	8	1.9%
B	Le corps & l'individu	7	1.6%
M	Mouvement, lieux, voyages & transports	5	1.2%
K	Divertissement, sports et jeux	4	0.9%
Total		430	100.0%

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

TABLE 3. Collocations of ‘mettre en place’

L2	L1	Hit	R1	R2
<i>de</i> (221)	<i>être</i> (208)	<i>mettre en place</i>	<i>un</i> (190)	<i>le</i> (64)
<i>le</i> (100)	<i>de</i> (123)		<i>de</i> (121)	<i>de</i> (7)
<i>avoir</i> (44)	<i>à</i> (63)		<i>le</i> (106)	<i>chaque</i> (6)
<i>pouvoir</i> (24)	<i>avoir</i> (41)		<i>dans</i> (102)	<i>un</i> (6)
<i>être</i> (22)	<i>et</i> (34)		<i>par</i> (70)	<i>que</i> (5)
<i>et</i> (21)	<i>se</i> (32)		<i>pour</i> (58)	<i>au</i> (4)
<i>afin</i> (16)	<i>action</i> (24)		<i>à</i> (56)	<i>centre</i> (4)
<i>devoir</i> (16)	<i>pour</i> (23)		<i>en</i> (55)	<i>sein</i> (4)
<i>qui</i> (13)	<i>dispositif</i> (21)		<i>au</i> (42)	<i>tout</i> (4)
<i>que</i> (12)	<i>déjà</i> (12)		<i>et</i> (23)	<i>ce</i> (3)

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

TABLE 4. Semantic Distribution and Frequencies of ‘mettre en place’

USAS Category Code	USAS Category Description	Frequency	Percentage of Total
S	Actions sociales, états et processus	102	34.6%
A	Termes généraux et abstraits	53	18.0%
P	Éducation	49	16.6%
G	Gouvernement et le domaine public	31	10.5%
X	Actions psychologiques, états et processus	28	9.5%
H	Architecture, batiments et la maison	11	3.7%
I	Argent & commerce	8	2.7%
Q	Actions linguistiques, états et processus	7	2.4%
Y	Science & technologie	3	1.0%
O	Substances, matériaux, objets & équipement	2	0.7%
M	Mouvement, lieux, voyages & transports	1	0.3%
Total		295	100.0%

CONCLUSION

- PROCESS of execution and ACT of foundation. First we build the structure, then we carry out the action. First we build the structure, then we carry out the action.
- The Profile of Mettre en œuvre (The Verb of PROCESS)
- The Profile of Mettre en place (The Verb of FOUNDATION)
- The Process vs. Foundation Dichotomy
- The Case of Overlap ("*Dispositif*")
- A Rhetorical Strategy of Governance
- The Two-Step Narrative
- The Grammatical Signature

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THANK YOU!