

Making sense of democratisation: a case study about extracurricular music workshops in France

Joris Cintero

▶ **To cite this version:**

Joris Cintero. Making sense of democratisation: a case study about extracurricular music workshops in France. British Journal of Music Education, 2023, 40 (1), pp.66-79. 10.1017/S0265051722000158 . halshs-04044448

HAL Id: halshs-04044448
https://shs.hal.science/halshs-04044448

Submitted on 24 Mar 2023

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution - NonCommercial - ShareAlike 4.0 International License

CrossMark

British Journal of Music Education (2022), 1–14
doi:10.1017/S0265051722000158

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

ARTICLE

Making sense of democratisation: a case study about extracurricular music workshops in France

Joris Cintéro

Laboratoire Éducation, Cultures, Politiques; Université Lyon 2, 86 Rue Pasteur, Lyon, 69007, France
Corresponding author. Email: joris.cintero@univ-lyon2.fr

Abstract

Since the early 2000s, education policy in France has strongly encouraged publicly funded conservatoires and music schools to forge partnerships with various stakeholders in sectors outside of specialised music education. This change in the objectives traditionally assigned to music schools and conservatoires has given rise to new 'pedagogical projects', among which extracurricular music workshops are quite widespread. This study investigated the views of specialised music teachers in relation to these new pedagogical formats through an analysis of their evaluations of a workshop led in a French school between 2018 and 2019. I interviewed the music teachers who participated in the project ($n = 8$), those who refused to participate ($n = 7$) and also the administrative staff ($n = 4$). The results indicate that far from the ecumenism traditionally associated with policies promoting the democratisation of culture, conservatoire teachers think about and are involved in these projects in different ways, reflecting a wide range of considerations around pedagogy, project quality, purpose or politics.

Keywords: Democratisation; music schools; pragmatic sociology; specialised music teachers; teachers' critique

Introduction

The organisation of publicly funded music schools and conservatoires is generally framed by public policies. As a result, the goals of these institutions vary according to different national and local policies[1]. This is the case in France, where conservatoires have long been at the centre of the French government's principle of 'cultural democratisation' (Dubois, 2012), which has led the Ministry of Culture to develop a framework defining their general organisation and pedagogical purposes (Veitl & Lefebvre, 2000; Lefebvre, 2014) and has led local authorities to support and finance a cultural infrastructure network (Urfalino, 2011, pp. 309–311). This dynamic has been strengthened since the early 2000s, with the progressive integration of conservatoires and music schools into educational, cultural and social policies at both *départemental* and local levels. This puts specialised music education institutions today at the crossroads of several public policies. The most recent example is their frequent inclusion in local educational programmes under the auspices of the *Projet Éducatif de Territoire* (Rancon, 2018), which promotes partnership-based youth projects. This type of local policy incites conservatoires and music schools to offer workshops in the framework of a common goal – in this case a general 'cultural education pathway' in a given geographical area. To do this, music schools must adapt their pedagogical offer to new situations and stakeholders that are not in alignment with their typical teaching programmes. This confronts teachers with new educational situations that merit analysis.

International research on the implementation and effects of music education policies has become a well-documented topic[2] (Schmidt & Colwell, 2017; Björk et al., 2018; Kos, 2010; Shaw, 2020). While there is a lot of research on the implementation of educational policies in French general education system (Lantheaume et al., 2008; Dounies, 2020), hardly any studies

© The Author(s), 2022. Published by Cambridge University Press. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike licence (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the same Creative Commons licence is included and the original work is properly cited. The written permission of Cambridge University Press must be obtained for commercial re-use.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

have focused on the specialised music education sector. This article aims to fill this gap by examining how teachers in music schools and conservatoires give meaning to their involvement in a particular type of democratisation policy.

'Democratisation' as an ambivalent notion

As the French policy scholar Noémi Lefebvre states, 'French specialised music education[3] is strongly marked by the subordination of culture to politics[4]' (Lefebvre, 2005, p. 31). This particular context gives the categories of thought forged by politics predominance not only in the definition of musical activities but also in the identity given to its actors (Douglas, 1986, p. 112). The notion of 'democratisation' is a good example of these political-based categories. Indeed, the idea that it is necessary to democratise music education was born in the late 1950s, with the creation of the Ministry of Culture and was theorised a few years later by the first major music education policy, *le Plan de dix ans pour la musique* (Lefebvre, 2014). Musical democratisation is then understood as the development of institutions offering music education of equal quality throughout the country. It is close to what French historian Antoine Prost (1986) calls a 'qualitative democratisation': the objective is not to change the content of the 'conservatoire culture' (Kingsbury, 1988), centred on 'great works', competition and orientated towards preparation for the profession of an orchestral musician, but to facilitate access to it by working-class background children. As noted by some researchers, the notion of democratisation is a real boundary object (Star & Griesamer, 1989): it is both the original purpose of the Ministry of Culture (Urfalino, 2011), a public policy, the main task of arts education institutions, and a means to legitimising, through vagueness, the action of the state in this area (Dubois, 2012).

Despite its importance to music schools and conservatoires, democratisation has been facing a constant contestation as a policy. From the end of the 1960s, prominent cultural actors have been speaking out against the cultural democratisation policy. In the context of May 1968, the Villeurbanne Declaration (1968) denounced the exclusionary, alienating, bourgeois nature of culture as conceived by the Ministry and its role in the marginalisation of *non-publics*. This philosophical critique[5] is in line with the work of the sociology of culture, which highlights that 'cultural imperatives can only affect those who want to demonstrate their affiliation to the cultivated world' (Bourdieu, Darbel & Schnapper, 1991 [1966], p. 25). The criticism of the cultural democratisation policy continued during the 1980s and 1990s through the publication of statistical surveys, coming from the ministerial departments themselves, which underlined the failure of cultural democratisation (Donnat, 1999; 1991). In the same way, studies dedicated to music education also highlighted the failure of conservatoires to enrol working-class students (Hennion, Martinant, & Vignolle, 1983; Pinçon-Charlot & Garnier, 1985). To sum up, democratisation as conceived by the Ministry of Culture and implemented by music schools and conservatoires has been criticised for its exclusion of a large part of the working class.

As a result, the questioning of the relative success of the 'cultural democratisation' policy has led to a multitude of further national and local policies in specialised music education. These policies include the reform of *solfège* (Ministère de la Culture, 1977), the development of experimental conservatoires in the 1980s, the progressive inclusion of popular music and collective training in the curricula of state-controlled music schools (Ministère de la Culture, 1984, 1992, 1996, 2008), the development of higher education programmes for specialised music teachers (SMTs) in the early 1990s, the generalisation of income-dependent tariffs and the multiplication of partnerships with primary and secondary schools (Ministère de la Culture, 2001). Also, these policies have gradually brought the specialised music education sector, initially considered as autonomous sector, closer to broader social, economic and urban concerns. This 'cultural approach to urban policies' (Ambrosino & Guillon, 2012) leads to changes in the work of artistic institutions. Nevertheless, this combination causes tensions that do not necessarily redefine the missions of the artistic institutions involved. As Blondel (2001, p. 310) shows, the inclusion of

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

cultural institutions in social policies 'does not mean they are pursuing the same objectives' as policymakers: it tends to a proliferation of competing definitions of democratisation. Due to the combination of these local, national, formal and informal policies, conservatoires and music schools have to adapt 'ways of doing' specific to the conservatoire model (Kingsbury, 1988; Nettl, 1995) to new tasks oriented towards social justice or the inclusion of particular audiences, even if they still represent a minor part of their action (Bois et al., 2014).

Making sense of the new 'dispositifs'[6]

Much research has focused on how teachers engage with the policies they face (Coburn, 2001; Spilane, Reiser & Reimer, 2002). Research on 'sensemaking' (Weick, 1995) shows that teachers have some influence on how policies are implemented (Spilane, 2004). The work carried out in Finland by Laes and Schmidt (2016) shows the positive impact that music teachers can have in their interpretation of policies, particularly on the promotion of inclusive practices. In Cyprus, Forari (2007) described how curriculum documents are interpreted and implemented in the classroom. She shows how music teachers' and policymakers' ideologies influence curricula's implementation and advocates to consider policy as a polydynamic, polyglot, polycentric and polymorphic process. Hennion's study (1988, pp. 57–89) on the 1977 reform of the *solfège* comes close to this conception. He shows how the meaning of this reform is constructed between the various mediators involved: teachers, members of the Ministry of Culture, teaching method publishers, directors and students of conservatoires. In all those cases, it is interesting to note the consideration of teachers as active agents in the implementation of public policies (Schmidt & Colwell, 2017).

Orchestral discovery workshops organised in primary schools are very well represented among the new forms of teaching characterised by partnership policies in France. Some studies have looked at the way in which conservatoire teachers participate in these workshops. Deslyper & Eloy (2020) noted that despite a discourse centred on the democratisation of music education, SMTs contribute to passing on 'dominant behavioural norms', imposing a certain relationship to time, body and reflexivity. Another study conducted by Giraud (2017, p. 24) in a similar workshop shows that they do not succeed, especially among the working-class pupils, to 'generate the desire and the possibility to pursue instrumental learning in a sustainable way'. The gap between these workshops and the functioning of the conservatoire leads those who decide to enrol to quickly abandon their studies. The results of this work point to the influence of the conservatoire's 'learning culture' (Perkins, 2013) on how teachers work. They also reveal the influence of school norms and sometimes the oppressive nature of the workshops that is explicitly situated in the rhetoric of effects (Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2013).

Method

Research context

This study aims to understand SMTs' views about the implementation of a new educational policy and how they construct its meaning. To do so, I studied a particular type of partnership policy that implements a specific definition of democratisation. The '*Projets Éducatifs de Territoire*' is a national educational policy initiative implemented by cities in partnership with the State and various local sports and cultural institutions. Its objective is to 'enable the organisation of extracurricular activities that extend and complement the public education service' (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2013). In other words, this educational policy seeks to facilitate children's access to sports and arts practices by organising 'localised educational pathways' in partnership with several social, arts and sports institutions. The survey focused on the implementation of this policy in one French Town: Longrin (a pseudonym).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Within this framework, Longrin's town council asked its music school to team up with the 12 local primary schools in order to set up extracurricular music workshops (EMWs). In each EMW, a group of SMT (2–3) worked with groups of 15–17 children between the ages of 5 and 8 in primary schools for 1 h during the lunch break, before or after their school meal. Depending on the teams and primary schools, several different types of music workshops were offered: choral singing, computer music creation, brass, string or percussion orchestras. The final objective was a concert at the end of the school year (in June), a specific condition requested by the music school director, though this was not included in the initial municipal project. Apart from the session's format and the purpose of the project, the EMW framework was vague and its content largely defined by the SMTs.

Theoretical framework

The study adopted a theoretical framework based on what Luc Boltanski has called 'a pragmatic sociology of critique' (Boltanski, 2011, pp. 18–49). Inspired by ethnomethodology, this approach refuses a division between science and 'ordinary' thought (Latour, 1987), rejecting 'the asymmetry between the sociologist enlightened by the light of his science and ordinary people sunk in illusion' (Boltanski, 2011, p. 23). Considering that individuals have critical and reflexive skills, this theoretical tradition, without lapsing into the rationalist individualism of neoclassical theories of action, is concerned with how individuals produce judgements in situations and shape a situated sense of justice (Boltanski & Thevenot, 2006). It also considers the heterogeneity of the elements that make up situations and are involved in the production of these judgements. Nicolas Dodier and Janine Barbot (2016) are particularly interested in this heterogeneity, through the study of what they call 'compound objects' (Dodier & Stavrianakis, 2018), building on the notion of the *dispositif* described by authors such as Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben. My analysis was built upon the new sociological definition of this concept proposed by Dodier & Barbot (2016, p. 298):

> *Generally speaking, a dispositif can be conceived of as a prepared concatenation of sequences intended to qualify or transform a state of affairs through the medium of an assemblage of material or linguistic elements.*

This definition highlights several important aspects of a *dispositif*: its temporality, purpose, transformative power and material and linguistic heterogeneity. Dodier and Barbot also propose a method of analysis that aims to highlight the normative bases upon which individuals position themselves in relation to a *dispositif*. I used their concept of 'normative repertoire' (Dodier & Barbot, 2016) to analyse how music teachers assess the different tasks related to the EMW *dispositif*. Inspired by the anthropologists Comaroff and Roberts, the aim of this concept is to reveal the 'heterogeneous and contradictory nature of norms' (Dodier & Barbot, 2016) to which individuals refer when they evaluate something – the idea being that the heterogeneity of the evaluations observed 'can uncover the general structure which is at the root of such evaluations' (ibid.). I adopted the normative repertoire approach to understand how teachers grasp the constituent heterogeneity of the EMW *dispositif*, not only in its material and language-related aspects but also in terms of the purposes it is supposed to serve. The aim of the analysis was not to produce a critique of the *dispositif* itself but rather to analyse the dynamics of the teacher's reflexivity towards changes affecting their 'normal work'.

Participants, research procedure and analysis[7]

The analysis is based on an interview survey of teachers about the EMW *dispositif* (Table 1). 80% of the teachers participating in the EMW were interviewed (8 teachers out of 10). A sample of

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 1. Details of Teachers and Staff

Code	Gender	Age	Status in the school	Status in the *dispositif*	Seniority in the school	Musical instruments	Discipline taught in the music school	Degrees	Previous experience in EMWs
PML #01	F	28	Teacher	Participant	6 months	Multi-instrumentalist (ancient music and popular music)	Choir and music theory (Solfège)	Master's degree in music performance and teaching (classical)	No
PML #02	F	36	Teacher	Participant	5 years	Double bass	Double bass	Teaching (classical)	No
PML #03	M	26	Teacher	Participant	6 months	Multi-instrumentalist (ancient music)	Music theory (Solfège)	Master's degree in music performance (classical)	Yes
PML #04	F	29	Teacher	Participant	6 months	Cello	Music theory (Solfège)	No degree	No
PML #05	F	30	Teacher	Participant	6 months	Violin and voice	Music theory (Solfège)	Teaching (classical)	Yes
PML #06	M	27	Teacher	Participant	1.5 years	Guitar and voice	Popular music	Teaching (popular music)	No
PML #07	M	40	Teacher	Participant	7 years	Saxophone	Saxophone, popular music	Teaching (classical)	Yes
PML #08	M	41	Teacher	Participant	10 years	Trumpet	Trumpet	Teaching (classical)	No
PML #09	M	46	Director	Director	10 years	Trumpet	Orchestra	No degree	No
PML#10	F	60	Teacher	EMW manager	38 years	Piano	Piano	No degree	No
PML#11	F	35	Staff	Music school staff	2.5 years	/	/	Administration degree	/
PML#12	F	45	Staff	Music school staff	3.5 years	/	/	Administration degree	/
PML#13	F	34	Teacher	Refused to join	7 years	Multi-instrumentalist (classical)	Bassoon	Master's degree in music performance and teaching (classical)	No
PML#14	F	50	Teacher	Refused to join	14 years	Voice and guitar	Music theory (Solfège)	Teaching degree	Yes

(*Continued*)

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Table 1. (*Continued*)

Code	Gender	Age	Status in the school	Status in the *dispositif*	Seniority in the school	Musical instruments	Discipline taught in the music school	Degrees	Previous experience in EMWs
PML#15	F	36	Teacher	Refused to join	6 years	Cello	Cello	Master's degree in music performance and teaching (classical)	No
PML#16	F	45	Teacher	Refused to join	20 years	Piano	Piano	Master's degree in music performance (classical)	No
PML#17	M	45	Teacher	Refused to join	22 years	Tuba	Tuba	Master's degree in music performance (classical)	No
PML#18	F	31	Teacher	Refused to join	4 years	Violin and piano	Music theory (Solfège)	Master's degree in music performance and teaching (classical)	No
PML#19	M	50	Teacher	Refused to join	1.5 years	Guitar	Guitar, popular music	Teaching degree	No

approximately 55% of the total music school staff participated in the research (16 teachers and 3 administrative members of staff out of 36 in total), mainly through interviews. Although the musical disciplines were limited to those proposed in the EMW, I selected teachers from different disciplines to provide a sample that was as representative as possible (e.g. trumpet, guitar, saxophone, double bass, cello, violin, etc.). The ages of the interviewed teachers participating in the EMW ranged from 26 to 41. Most were new to the music school: 5 out of 8 had less than 1.5 years of seniority. In fact, I learned that they had been hired mainly to work in the EMW *dispositif*. Each teacher was asked to describe his or her musical career, teaching career and daily work. I also discussed their agreement or refusal to join in the *dispositif* and their reactions to how it worked.

Data collection was carried out between December 2018 and April 2019. Although I did not participate in the EMW sessions, I adopted an ethnographic approach within the music school, which allowed me to engage in many informal discussions with teachers, both those who did and did not participate in the EMW. This allowed me to collect a large number of observations regarding the EMW and at the same time conduct interviews with the non-teaching staff of the school in order to better understand the organisation, history and values of the institution. Field notes were taken during discussions and meetings within the music school.

My position as a former music teacher and conservatoire student allowed both a deeper understanding of the repertoires teachers use in their daily practice and easier access to the field, as I was seen as both a musician and a social scientist.

The data analysis was based on the interview transcripts (the citations selected for this article have been translated to English). As suggested by Dodier and Barbot, I followed the principles of grounded theory as defined by Glaser and Strauss (2010), systematically coding the evaluations and judgements made by teachers about the EMW. The criterion of 'theoretical saturation' allowed me to retain certain codes rather than others. I then aggregated the codes into broader themes to reveal teachers' normative repertoires.

Findings

For the majority of teachers who participated in the EMW, the experience was not very positive. At the end of the survey process (early 2019), an informal poll revealed that more than half of the participating teachers wanted to leave the EMW at the end of the year. One year later, over one-third of the participating teachers had left. It was clear from the start of the survey that the EMW was a source tension both individually and amongst teachers. These tensions manifested themselves in three different ways. The first was uncertainty about the funding, the workload and the inclusion of new stakeholders. The second was linked to the definition of pedagogical quality and its justification. The third tension was linked to the aims of the EMW, reflecting the weight of economic and political constraints on teacher's work.

Instability related to the enactment of the EMW

The first aspect of the normative repertoire related to the tensions produced by the expansion of the stakeholders' network involved in the implementation of the *dispositif*. Even before the project began, tensions emerged relating to the sustainability of the funding granted to implement the EMW. The atypical presence of the municipal government in financing the project seemed to be a point teachers considered in evaluating their involvement: there was some suspicion about the city council's financial commitment. As PML#07 says: 'Apparently the funding comes directly from the town hall. But financially speaking, it's always been a bit rubbish for the music school. Now we have money coming in for the project and they say 'you can buy all the instruments you want, what we ask for we'll get. [. . .] I think it's a bit weird, usually the town hall refuses to commit itself or to increase the subsidy it gives us'. However, doubts about town hall's new role in

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

music school's operations were not necessarily an obstacle to teachers' commitment in the EMW, as the same interviewee pointed out: 'So I said to myself, "OK, you're going to do it", it's good that there's money. But still … we don't know if it will last, if it will be over next year, or if the budgets will decrease little by little'. For this teacher, the 'normal' music school situation – which is characterised by struggling to make ends meet – stood in contrast to the generosity of the funding for the EMW: the money at stake was at the source of their decision to participate in the project. At the same time, other teachers used the same reason as the source of their refusal to participate in the project: 'Well, I thought they had some nerve. We are being given less and less money and asked to do more and more. I'd rather be funded for what we usually do here than throw all that money away on a project like this' (PML#15).

The expansion of stakeholders participating in the project has led to the emergence of new tasks related to coordination. These are in addition to the tasks already carried out by teachers in their daily work. This point was highlighted by PML#02: 'We have a person in charge of coordinating the project at the music school, the meetings and so on, [. . .] but she's disorganised and not connected with the project. It's quite new for her … she's not very reliable. So [. . .] we still have to manage and verify a lot of things'. For some, this extra work represented an interesting opportunity to forge links in the local area and with different partners, as PML#06 expresses it: 'You talk with the students, you talk with the schools [. . .] it connects people a bit, in fact. And it's interesting to connect with people; in fact, they probably have the same mission in the same area. [. . .] Working together can be good. It can also be not so good. But right now, it's going well'. For other teachers, the increase in the coordination work was evident before the project began. It was a determining factor in their refusal to take part: 'I should have been involved in running the thing: the meetings, the problems with the primary schools? I didn't want to. I wouldn't have been able to do the work properly, and in the end it would have had an impact on my work here and on my colleagues in the project. I have enough work as it is' (PML#13). The additional tasks created by the need to participate in the coordination and running of the project reveal the organisational weaknesses underlying the project's expansion of the network of stakeholders. The growing number of people risks weakening the human and material connections, usually flexible and relatively stable, within the music school in a project that is new to all stakeholders. Thus, the tension between attractive funding and increased bureaucracy – extending to the town hall itself – was a central issue in teachers' views of the EMW. In one example, the singing workshop had to wait more than 2 months for a piano to accompany the choir. This delay (which also occurred in the string workshop) was not due to human error but to the administration involved in the EMW, as the decision to tune a piano had to be signed off by all the parties involved. In addition, broadening the stakeholder base meant expanding the age spectrum of participants. For some teachers, the involvement of very young children (from the age of 5) was a deterrent, as they did not feel able to work with such young children: 'It's not a question of saying the workshop is good or bad. I just think it takes a certain discipline to do it and a certain knowledge of how to manage a group. I can't work with such young children. I don't know … it's personal' (PML#18).

Defining 'pedagogical quality'

Another aspect of the normative repertoire I identified was linked to the pedagogical tensions in the project. A first tension was directly related to an issue that is both central and extremely vague for teachers, that is, defining the pedagogical 'quality' of their actions. This arises from oppositions between several ways of doing things, and how to justify one's work in a new context. To do this, it is necessary to establish a set of elements sufficiently solid to defend a point of view and apply it with a sense of justice (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). Some teachers linked their definition of pedagogical quality to the practices employed at the conservatoire. For example, PML#03 described the value of music as a pedagogical action rather than entertainment: 'In primary schools, [. . .] it's not day care. I mean, we try to set up projects and make music. I want it to be successful,

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

demanding. We don't do entertainment, we're not entertainers'. For other teachers, the pedagogical quality of their intervention depended more on anchoring it in a broader, partnership-based project, linked to a set of goals and values distinct from those of the music school: 'The role of public schools is to educate, but they also have a mission of transmitting values: we are the same. We're not just here to teach an instrument. It's broader' (PML#06).

Generally, the interviewees seemed to consider teaching in the EMW as a 'degradation' of their work in the music school – an inferior form of their usual work – as one participant described: 'Not all of my colleagues are very comfortable with the idea of having to adapt and sometimes to lower their requirements. We don't do entertainment, but sometimes it's close to that. We have to hold back the kids because some of them go up on the tables . . . it's not very pleasant' (PML#02). The idea this project represented a 'degradation of their work was at the root of a certain number of refusals to take part. Some teachers refuse to consider that genuine music teaching can take place this way: "I refuse to be a part of this. You can't learn music like that. It's not serious"' (PML#17).

The question of pedagogical quality also went beyond the 'ideological' level. It came to musicians' own skills. The participants equally expressed a tension relating to their role as instrumentalists. Should they present themselves as instrumental experts or as versatile musical activity leaders? This represented a real pedagogical test for some participants: 'The problem with this project is that I'm not a specialist in African percussion. I can do sixteenth notes in rhythm, I can do rhythm, but I'm not an expert of it. I don't know about African traditions or culture. I feel a bit weird about that. [I feel like] we're taking people for idiots. We're conservatoire teachers; we're supposed to do things correctly' (PML#01). This attitude reflects that the teacher is attached to a certain identity derived from the conservatoire model. When this teacher compares the idea of advanced instrumental expertise (he is also a musician in a well-known percussion orchestra) to the mission he is supposed to carry out, he feels it belittles the quality of his work and the project itself. In contrast, other teachers valued the difference in the pedagogical quality of their work at the music school and in the workshop: 'What I like about it is that I can indulge myself. It's really in the continuity of what I do in the music school: the kids I have in the workshop will surely come to the music school next year. It's like I was preparing them' (PML#04).

Beyond the quality of the music teaching itself, some teachers also had pedagogical concerns more specific to teaching children. The students' willingness to participate in the EMW was one of the elements weighed up by certain participants: 'If I had to do it again, I would change the timing of the workshop. Between noon and 2 p.m. children are exhausted, and we need them to be ready to work. It doesn't allow good working conditions, either for them or for us' (PML#03).

The purpose of the project

The last normative repertoire related to the purpose attributed to the EMW. The teachers spent a lot of time on reflecting on the EMW 'real' aims, bringing in broader considerations about politics, money or arts for art's sake. These three relatively abstract points structure teachers' perception of the project's purposes, as summarised by this teacher who refused to join the EMW: 'It's sad, but we're a business, which means that at some point, it has to be profitable. [. . .] The word profitability may be a bit strong, but people invest in the conservatoire and there has to be a return. It seems legitimate to do what the people who finance us tell us to do. It's public money!' (PML#14). This three-dimensional matrix brings into tension fairly ideal-typical visions of the artistic, financial and political spheres and was at the source of antagonistic positions that seemed to strongly influence the participation or not of teachers in the EMW: '[My job] is not to do business, [it is] to pass on my art and make people who come [to the conservatoire] love good music. It is clear that [the project] with the primary school is nepotism: it is really to please the mayor, for the elections' (PML#15). Denouncing the project as a mere political tool designed to re-elect the mayor, this teacher did not believe it serves an educational purpose and did not take part in the project.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

For other teachers, the project was also seen as political, but they felt that participating in it was a way to build links with the municipal government to secure aspects of the music school under threat. Thus, participation in the EMW was viewed as a compromise to try to save the school: 'I organised the beginners' orchestra really to attract new students, to keep the school alive. [. . .] We need new students, otherwise the city will reduce the number of teachers in the school' (PML#07).

Here it seems that teachers normative work consists in 'putting back in place' the aims of the EMW. In short, teachers include personal educational goals in a project that does not seem to contain any for them. This shows how teachers manage to put the eventual outcomes of the project at the service of their educational work. If this re-establishment work is successful, teachers make sense of the project and become involved in fruitful compromises. On the other hand, it seems that when this re-establishment is impossible, refusal to join the EMW is the most plausible solution to save one's face.

A 'democratic' dispositif struggling to find its place in the music school

The EMWs suggested by the town hall and implemented by the music school are rooted in a certain conception of democratisation. It offers access for as many children as possible to an eclectic musical initiation included in primary school time and space. These workshops do not claim to train children to learn a particular instrument. Rather, they are thought of as a way of stimulating musical sensitivity in children who wish to do so, without any automatic gateway to music school. Because of its non-professional aims and its initiatory dimension, one might think that this *dispositif* fits easily into the usual tasks of music teachers and their way of understanding musical democratisation. Despite the variety of views and the positive stance adopted by some participants, it is clear this is not the case.

The interviews showed music teachers reflected carefully on the meaning of their involvement in this new project. A close analysis of their views makes it clear that their reactions are far more complex than a 'resistance to change' (Dent & Goldberg, 1999). Their views, positive or negative, cannot be equated with bad faith or unwillingness in principle: their comments provide insight into the reasons and reflexivity leading teachers to participate or not in the project. They thus give access to some of the elements valued by teachers in the course of their work: in short, 'what they value' (Dewey, 2011). My analysis of the EMW *dispositif*, which is inherently heterogeneous, shows that teachers' evaluations cannot be reduced solely, as is very often the case, to purely pedagogical or artistic considerations. It also illustrates how teachers make sense of educational policies and democratisation.

SMT's normative repertoires suggest that the *dispositif* is viewed as being located at margins of the music school. The omnipresent reference to the music school 'normal' functioning in their evaluations shows that it is difficult for them to integrate the EMW in the definition of their work. Teachers' remarks about the money the project brings back to the school are also made in relation to the 'normal' functioning of the school: it can be perceived as a necessary sacrifice to carry on the music school's traditional tasks. Similar considerations apply to the pedagogical level. These various elements suggest that the 'conservatoire culture' has a fairly significant influence on the SMT's evaluations towards the EMW. Some teachers indeed justified their positions on the basis of judgements characteristic of the conservatoire model, such as skill (Mills & Smith, 2003), seriousness and a certain form of tradition (Cintero, 2020). Although they did not directly refer to excellence, it can nevertheless be hypothesised that the categorical refusal of some participants to 'lower their standards' indicates an attachment to a certain music teaching model. In any case, teachers' attitudes to the project seem to depend both on their relationship with this heritage and on how it can be transposed, in whole or in part, to the EMW. The issue around the project is then not only specific to the work itself but involves the professional identity of the music teachers. This

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

highlights the axiological and praxeological tensions inherent in transporting a 'professional genre' outside its usual environment, which was observed by Carraud (2012) with artists working in a lower secondary school, and by Ruppin (2015) in the context of an 'opera at school' project.

We noted the importance for teachers of defining, for oneself and for others, the work carried out within the EMW. The forming of this definition, which often resembles a justification, is based on a set of concepts and representations involving 'good work': concepts and representations which are known to be manifold and unstable (Lantheaume & Hélou, 2008, pp. 93–114). My case study was no exception to this rule: the pedagogical concepts expressed were extremely heterogeneous. However, despite differences in the definition of the nature of 'good work', work within the EMW was perceived in relation to a common professional type scorned by SMTs: sociocultural mediators. There are several possible ways to interpret this consensus. From a Bourdieusian perspective (Bourdieu, 1991), it seems to express a 'corporatist' stance that distinguishes one profession from another in the same field by considering it inferior. This stigma would then be a simple case of the conflicts that animate the field of music education. However, this does not take into account the fact that teachers 'poach' (Abbott, 1988) on the territory of sociocultural mediators and as such perform tasks that could be considered by purists as 'dirty work'. Specialised music education in France has been established outside of the national general education system (Alten, 1995) and far from any desire for 'initiation' to music. A refusal to encroach on the jurisdiction of the sociocultural sector can then be read as a means to avoid being 'degraded' by participating in an activity that is not in line with the skills of the specialist music teacher. It also raises the difficulty for the teachers involved to perceive democratisation other than through the 'lens' of the conservatoire. This can be problematic at a time when such institutions are increasingly involved in policies that mobilise multiple definitions of democratisation.

The results also underline SMT's relationship to educational policies. It shows that teachers make sense of their involvement from a fragmented view of the situation, which is essentially based on local elements. Far from being surprising – as we know policy engagement is not widely viewed as part of teacher identity (Schmidt, 2017) – we can think as Latour that this situation is only the result of the position of teachers in the network shaped by this public policy. Situated in its music school part, they obviously have 'sturdy but extremely narrow views of the connected whole' (Latour, 2005, p. 181). This situation thus raises two questions. Firstly, it emphasises the need to integrate content on education and cultural policies within the training of French SMTs, both within and outside the field of music (Aguilar & Richerme, 2016; Aguilar & Dye, 2020). This would allow teachers to develop a better understanding of the *dispositifs* in which they are involved. Secondly, it must be noted that the critical power of the arguments formulated by teachers is weakened by their 'local' formulation (Boltanski et al., 1984). It can be hypothesised that this mode of appropriation limits teachers' negotiating power in the implementation of policies. As Schmidt (2017, p. 16) points out, it is necessary for teachers to carry out in-depth critical work on the very content of these policies 'so that narrow agendas with less than democratic aims can be blocked and educational reform not be done to teachers but rather with them'.

Conclusion

Music schools and conservatoires are increasingly involved in policies that use the democratisation of music for artistic, social and economic purposes. This situation leads them to adapt pedagogical *dispositifs*. The work of redefinition carried out by music teachers in relation to these *dispositifs* is still influenced by the classical model and functioning of the conservatoire. These results are quite consistent with research conducted in France on the effects of these *dispositifs* on children (Deslyper & Eloy, 2020). These teachers seem to perceive them as marginal actions within the school, or even as 'dirty work' (Hughes, 1951). This leads teachers to generally discredit this work in favour of more traditional tasks. This raises some questions: the new goals devolved to

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

conservatoires and music schools are becoming more and more important in their credibility with the public authorities. Indeed, the inability of these institutions to enrol audiences from the working classes on a permanent basis means that the political authorities are questioning their traditional functioning. They then tend to propose solutions that stem from their own conceptualisation of democratisation and work, which are often far removed from the reality and constraints of teaching work. These new tasks, rather disregarded by teachers, are becoming increasingly important in conservatoires and music schools, posing a dilemma for teachers: to adapt or to disappear? I believe that an alternative way lies, as Schmidt and Colwell (2017) point out, in the involvement of teachers in the discussion and implementation of educational policies. The re-invention of the French conservatoire pedagogical model can only be achieved by teachers taking ownership of the political issues at stake.

Declaration of conflicting interests. The author declares no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Funding. The author received no financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Notes

1 As pointed out by Ganvert (1999), in France while the names of public music education institutions may refer to the French region or *département* they are located in, they are primarily municipal.
2 ISME's Commission on Music Policy regularly publishes the results of its work on the subject (Aguilar et al., 2020).
3 The French music education system is divided into two main branches. The first concerns the teaching of music within general education, controlled by the Ministry of National Education. It is compulsory up to 'collège' (first half of secondary school education). The second branch concerns specialised music education and generally takes place in music schools and conservatoires. It is controlled by the Ministry of Culture, even though a lot of music schools (especially community music schools) are not officially under its control. Although today it is mainly dedicated to the training of amateurs, its teaching is historically orientated towards the training of professional musicians. This article focuses on this second branch.
4 As she points out, it is not a question of saying that culture does not exist outside the categories elaborated by political institutions, but rather that they have a particularly powerful legitimising power over what is cultural and what is not (Lefebvre, 2005). David Looseley (2003) studied the application of this principle to popular music in France.
5 One can also pick another striking example such as the classical pamphlet 'Asphyxiating Culture' written by the visual artist Jean Dubuffet (1988) [1968], denouncing the alienating action of the Ministry of Culture.
6 I use the term *dispositif* ('apparatus'), employed by Michel Foucault to describe the various institutional mechanisms and knowledge structures that maintain power in a social body. In this article, I will use it in the sense given by Nicolas Dodier and Janine Barbot: see the 'Theoretical framework' section.
7 See *Details of teachers and staff*

References

ABBOTT, A. D. (1988). *The System of Professions : An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

AGUILAR, C. E. & DYE, C. K. (2020). Developing music education policy Wonks: Preservice music education and policy. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, **29**(2), 78–88. doi: 10.1177/1057083719885335

AGUILAR, C. E., LAGOS, C. P., PREST, A. & RICHERME, L. K. (2020). Proceedings of the 20th International Seminar of the ISME Commission on Policy: Culture, Media and Education [electronic resource].

AGUILAR, C. E. & RICHERME, L. K. (2016). A descriptive study of music teacher educators' beliefs about policy. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, **25**(2), 37–49. doi: 10.1177/1057083714553986

ALTEN, M. (1995). *La musique dans l'école: de Jules Ferry à nos jours*. Paris: Éditions EAP.

AMBROSINO, C. & GUILLON, V. (2012). Gouverner, consommer et produire. Les trois mondes de la ville créative: Londres, Birmingham, Lyon et Lille. In G. Saez & J.-P. Saez (eds.), *Les nouveaux enjeux des politiques culturelles: Dynamiques européennes* (pp. 95–105). Paris: La Découverte.

BJÖRK, C., DI LORENZO TILLBORG, A., HEIMONEN, M. & HOLST, F. (2018). Music education policy in schools of music and performing arts in four Nordic countries: The potential of multi-actor processes. *Finnish Journal of Music Education*, **21**(2), 10–37.

BLONDEL, A. (2001). "Reinforcement of social cohesion." The inclusion of theater decentralization institutions in urban planning projects. *Sociétés et Représentations*, **11**(1), 287–310. doi: 10.3917/sr.011.0287

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

BOIS, G., GARDON, S., GIRAUD, F. & RAYNAUD, A. (2014). *La démocratisation de l'accès aux pratiques artistique à travers l'apprentissage dans les établissements d'enseignement artistique*. Lyon: Rapport de recherche financé par la Région Rhône-Alpes pour le compte de la NACRE.

BOLTANSKI, L. (2011). *On Critique: A Sociology of Emancipation*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

BOLTANSKI, L., DARRE, Y. & SCHILTZ, M.-A. (1984). Denunciation. *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, **51**(1), 3–40. doi: 10.3406/arss.1984.2212

BOLTANSKI, L. & THEVENOT, L. (2006) [1991]. *On Justification: Economies of Worth*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

BOURDIEU, P. (1991). The Litterary Field. *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, **89**(1), 3–46. doi: 10.3406/arss.1991.2986

BOURDIEU, P., DARBEL, A. & SCHNAPPER, D. (1991) [1966]. *The Love of Art: European Art Museums and Their Public*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

CARRAUD, F. (2012). Reconciling the academic with the artistic viewpoint: Teaching experiments in "primary and secondary schools toward ambition, innovation, and success" (ECLAIR) school. *Sociologies pratiques*, **25**(2), 73–84. doi: 10.3917/sopr.025.0073

CINTERO, J. (2020). Between legacy and instructions, elements for a pragmatic analysis of French music teacher's professional identities. *Cahiers de la recherche sur l'éducation et les savoirs*, (**Hors-série n° 7**), 251–271.

COBURN, C. E. (2001). Collective Sensemaking about reading: How teachers mediate reading policy in their professional communities. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, **23**(2), 145–170. doi: 10.3102/01623737023002145

DENT, E. B. & GOLDBERG, S. G. (1999). Challenging "Resistance to Change". *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, **35**(1), 25–41. doi: 10.1177/0021886399351003

DESLYPER, R. & ELOY, F. (2020). Redressing the dispositions of children from working class and their families through artistic and cultural education: the normalizing ambitions of two education programs for learning music through orchestral practice. *Cahiers de la recherche sur l'éducation et les savoirs*, Hors-série n° **7**, 87–109.

DEWEY, J. (2011). *La formation des valeurs*. Paris: La découverte.

DODIER, N. & BARBOT, J. (2016). The force of dispositifs. *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, **71**(2), 421–450.

DODIER, N. & STAVRIANAKIS, A. (eds). (2018). *Les objets composés: Agencements dispositifs assemblages*. Paris: Éditions de l'EHESS.

DONNAT, O. (1991). Démocratisation culturelle: la fin d'un mythe. *Esprit*, **170**(3–4), 65–79.

DONNAT, O. (1999). Social stratification of cultural practices and its evolution from 1973 to 1997. *Revue française de sociologie*, **40**(1), 111–119. doi: 10.2307/3322521

DOUGLAS, M. (1986). *How Institutions Think*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

DOUNIES, T. (2020). The two sides of an implementation story: Slack between saying and doing in applying the reform of moral and civic education. *Gouvernement et action publique*, **9**(2), 41–64. doi: 10.3917/gap.202.0041

DUBOIS, V. (2012). *La politique culturelle: genèse d'une catégorie d'intervention publique*. Paris: Belin.

DUBUFFET, J. (1988) [1968]. *Asphyxiating Culture and Other Writings*. New York: Four Walls Eight Windows.

FORARI, A. (2007). Making sense of music education policy. *British Journal of Music Education*, **24**(2), 135–146. doi: 10.1017/S0265051707007395

GANVERT, G. (1999). *L'enseignement de la musique en France : situation, problèmes, réflexions*. Paris: L'Harmattan.

GAZTAMBIDE-FERNÁNDEZ, R. (2013). Why the arts don't do anything: Toward a new vision for cultural production in education. *Harvard Educational Review*, **83**(1), 211–237. doi: 10.17763/haer.83.1.a78q39699078ju20

GIRAUD, F. (2017). Baby steps in cultural democratisation: The part-educational, part-artistic objectives of a school orchestra. *Agora débats/jeunesses*, **76**(2), 23–37. doi: 10.3917/agora.076.0023

GLASER, B. & STRAUSS, A. (2010). *La découverte de la théorie ancrée*. Paris: Armand Colin.

HENNION, A. (1988). *Comment la musique vient aux enfants. Une anthropologie de l'enseignement musical*. Paris: Anthropos.

HENNION, A., MARTINAT, F. & VIGNOLLE, J-P. (1983). *Les conservatoires et leurs élèves*. Paris: ministère de la Culture — La Documentation Française.

HUGHES, E. C. (1951). Mistakes at work. *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science/Revue canadienne d'Économie et de Science politique*, **17**(3), 320–327.

KINGSBURY, H. (1988). *Music, Talent, and Performance: A Conservatory Cultural System*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

KOS, R. P. (2010). Developing capacity for change: A policy analysis for the music education profession. *Arts Education Policy Review*, **111**(3), 97–104. doi: 10.1080/10632911003626903

LAES, T. and SCHMIDT, P. (2016). Activism within music education: working towards inclusion and policy change in the Finnish music school context. *British Journal of Music Education*, **33**(1), 5–23. doi: 10.1017/S0265051715000224

LANTHEAUME, F., BESSETTE-HOLLAND, F. & COSTE, S. (2008). *Les enseignants de lycée professionnel face aux réformes: Tensions et ajustements dans le travail*. Lyon: Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique.

LANTHEAUME, F. & HELOU, C. (2008). *La souffrance des enseignants: une sociologie pragmatique du travail enseignant*. Paris: PUF.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press

LATOUR, B. (1987). *Science in Action*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
LATOUR, B. (2005). *Reassembling the Social, an Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press.
LEFEBVRE, N. (2005). Didactiques, musiques actuelles et institutions publiques: pour l'invention d'un modèle. *Enseigner la musique*, **8**, 23–36.
LEFEBVRE, N. (2014). *Marcel Landowski : Une politique fondatrice de l'enseignement musical: 1966–1974*. Lyon: CEFEDEM AuRA, Comité d'Histoire du Ministère de la Culture.
LOOSELEY, D. (2003). Cultural democratisation and popular music. *Modern & Contemporary France*, **11**(1), 45–55. doi: 10.1080/0963948032000067445
MILLS, J. & SMITH, J. (2003). Teachers' beliefs about effective instrumental teaching in schools and higher education. *British Journal of Music Education*, **20**(1), 5–27. doi: 10.1017/S0265051702005260
MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION NATIONALE. (2013). Projet éducatif territorial. Circulaire n° 2013-036 du 20 mars 2013 publiée au BO n ° 12 du 21 mars 2013.
MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE. (1977). *Études de formation musicale*. Paris: Ministère de la Culture.
MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE. (1984). *Schéma directeur pour l'organisation pédagogique d'un conservatoire national de région et d'une école nationale de musique*. Paris: Ministère de la Culture.
MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE. (1992). *Schéma directeur pour l'organisation pédagogique des écoles de musique et de danse*. Paris: Ministère de la culture/CENAM.
MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE. (1996). *Schéma national d'orientation pédagogique des écoles de musique et de danse*. Paris: Ministère de la Culture.
MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE. (2001). *Charte de l'enseignement artistique spécialisé*. Paris: Ministère de la Culture.
MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE. (2008). *Schéma national d'orientation pédagogique de l'enseignement initial de la musique*. Paris: Ministère de la Culture.
NETTL, B. (1995). *Heartland Excursions: Ethnomusicological Reflections on Schools of Music*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
PERKINS, R. (2013). Learning cultures and the conservatoire: an ethnographically-informed case study. *Music Education Research*, **15**(2), 196–213. doi: 10.1080/14613808.2012.759551
PINÇON-CHARLOT, M. & GARNIER, Y. (1985). Enseigner la musique ? L'exemple d'un conservatoire municipal. *Les cahiers de l'animation* **51**(3), 13–31.
PROST, A. (1986). *L'enseignement s'est-il démocratisé ?* Paris: PUF.
RANCON, S. (2018). The participation procedures in the construction of a local participation project. Public action instruments and educational discourses. *Les Sciences de l'éducation – Pour l'Ère nouvelle*, **51**(1), 37–61. doi: 10.3917/lsdle.511.0037
RUPPIN, V. (2015). Understanding the Dysfunctions of an Artistic Partnership Project: Opera at Schools. *Éducation et sociétés*, **35**, 151–167. doi: 10.3917/es.035.0151
SCHMIDT, P. (2017). Why policy matters: Developing a policy vocabulary within music education. In P. Schmidt & R. Colwell (eds.), *Policy and the political life of music education* (pp. 11–36). New York: Oxford University Press.
SCHMIDT, P. & COLWELL, R. (2017). *Policy and the political life of music education*. New York: Oxford University Press.
SHAW, R. D. (2020). Finding footprints: Analyzing arts education policy implementation. *Arts Education Policy Review*, **121**(1), 1–9. doi: 10.1080/10632913.2018.1530711
SPILLANE, J., REISER, B. J. & REIMER, T. (2002). Policy implementation and *cognition*: Reframing and refocusing implementation research. *Review of Educational Research*, **72**(3), 387–431. doi: 10.3102/00346543072003387
SPILLANE, J. P. (2004). *Standards Deviation: How Schools Misunderstand Education Policy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
STAR, S. L. & GRIESEMER, J. R. (1989). Institutional ecology, translations' and boundary objects: Amateurs and professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, 1907–39. *Social Studies of Science*, **19**(3), 387–420. doi: 10.1177/030631289019003001
URFALINO, P. (2011). *L'invention de la politique culturelle*. Paris: Hachette.
VEITL, A. & LEFEBVRE, N. (2000). *Maurice Fleuret, une politique démocratique de la musique: 1981–1986*. Paris: La documentation française.
WEICK, K. E. (1995). *Sensemaking in Organizations*. London: Sage Publications.

Cite this article: Cintéro J. Making sense of democratisation: a case study about extracurricular music workshops in France. *British Journal of Music Education*. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051722000158 Published online by Cambridge University Press