Abstract

Using music – on the car as a concert hall
(Att använda musik – om bilen som konsertlokal)
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To play music in the car is an everyday activity. A pilot study showed that
individuals play music to bring about changes within themselves and that
the car constitutes a haven when seeking privacy. The aim of this disserta-
tion is to find out why people want to play music in the car.

An enquiry was sent out to 1000 randomly chosen men and women, 25
and 53 years old, with either advanced or basic education. Employing flexi-
ble questions, 12 interviews were carried out with individuals chosen from
the enquiry. In a field experiment using a specially equipped car capable of
registering driving behaviour, different types of music, both familiar and
unfamiliar, were used to manipulate five individuals selected from the inter-
views. The music consisted of tunes chosen according to the preferences of
the participants.

The results of the enquiry showed that one third of the respondents had
their strongest musical experience in the car and almost fifty percent consid-
ered the car a good place to be left in peace. The interviews could be sor-
ted into categories describing how music is used in general and in the car.
A model was developed describing the process of how music is chosen with
the purpose of creating a desired effect. The field experiment showed that
favourite tunes and tunes creating positive surprises, irritation and stress
have the greatest impact on the driving behaviour.

The results also indicate that every musical experience is strongly rela-
ted to the individual and therefore, generalisations must be made with
cautions. The favourite tune has a special importance and dominates over
most other factors. The interviewee demonstrated a self-knowledge, which
seems intuitive and was usually not verbalised. This self-knowledge could
be developed for the benefit of the individual and in the context of traffic
safety.

The car can be a requisite for an existential experience of music. The
space is small, facilitating closeness to the music. The driver can use music
in any way he/she wants to in the car. The effect of a tune on the same
person can vary on different occasions depending on how the person feels.
Music and cars represent existential values, alone and in combination.

Key words: cars, music, existential values, the individual experience and use
of music, effects of music, consequences for driving behaviour.

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