

# **Syntactic and Semantic Features of Premodification in Second-hand Car Advertisements**

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## KÖYHÄJOKI, MIRJAMI: Syntactic and Semantic Features of Premodification in Second-hand Car Advertisements

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Tässä pro gradu -tutkielmassa tutkitaan premodifikaatiota käytettyjen autojen mainoksissa, eli sitä, mitkä sanat sijoittuvat nominaalilausekkeessa ennen substantiivia ja määrittävät sitä. Tarkoituksena on tutkia sitä, eroaako käytettyjen autojen mainosten premodifikaatio muusta mainoskielestä ja erityisesti uusien autojen mainoksista niin paljon, että voidaan puhua erillisestä tyylilajista.

Premodifikaatiota tutkitaan sekä rakenteellisesta että semanttisesta näkökulmasta. Rakenteellisesti tutkitaan sitä, kuinka pitkiä premodifikaatioketjut ovat, missä järjestyksessä niissä olevat määritteet esiintyvät ja koordinoitane määritteitä esimerkiksi konjunktioiden avulla. Semanttisiin piirteisiin liittyvien tutkimuskysymysten avulla pyritään selvittämään, minkä semanttisen luokan sanoja käytetään eniten, kuinka suuressa osassa premodifikaatioketjuja yhdistellään semanttisia luokkia ja mitkä ovat yleisimmät sanat näissä luokissa. Lopuksi tutkitaan vielä sitä, kuinka pitkiä ja konventionaalisia mainoksissa käytettävät väritermit ovat ja mitkä ovat yleisimmin käytettyjä väritermejä.

Materiaali on kerätty kahdesta brittiläisestä klassisiin autoihin keskittyvästä autolehdestä, jotka ovat nimeltään *Classic & Sports Car* ja *Octane*. Tutkimusaineisto on rajattu koskemaan käytettyjä henkilöautoja sisältäviä välittäjien mainoksia, joita analysoitiin 271 kappaletta. Tutkielma sisältää lisäksi osion, jossa käytettyjen autojen mainoksia verrataan uusien autojen mainoksiin. *Car and Driver* -lehdestä kerättyjä uusien autojen mainoksia analysoitiin 62 kappaletta.

Tutkimuksessa havaittiin, että käytettyjen autojen mainosten premodifikaatio eroaa uusien autojen mainoksista siten, että ensiksi mainituissa käytetään pidempiä premodifikaatioketjuja. Premodifikaatioketjussa olevien sanojen järjestys on melko tavanomainen, mutta koordinaatiota käytetään niukasti. Pitkät, koordinoimattomat premodifikaatioketjut ovat yleisiä mainoksissa, koska niiden toivotaan säästävän tilaa ja herättävän asiakkaiden mielenkiinnon.

Semanttisista luokista käytetään eniten pääsanaa identifioivia määritteitä, jotka ilmaisevat usein autoihin liittyvää teknistä informaatiota. Monissa premodifikaatioketjuissa myös yhdistellään sanoja useasta semanttisesta ryhmästä, jolloin yksi ketju voi samanaikaisesti sekä kuvailla että identifioida pääsanaa. Yleisempiä määritteitä tarkasteltaessa voidaan huomata, että mainoksissa käytetään sanoja, jotka korostavat auton alkuperäisyyttä (kuten lausekkeissa *original paint* tai *factory matching numbers*), mutta toisaalta myös auton hyvää kuntoa korostavat sanat ovat yleisiä, mikä käy ilmi esimerkiksi lausekkeista *recent repair* ja *new clutch*.

Mainoksissa käytettyjä väritermejä analysoitaessa havaittiin, että jos väritermi toimii jonkin substantiivin etumääritteenä, se on usein hyvin tavallinen ja koostuu yhdestä sanasta. Sen sijaan itsenäiset väritermit ovat pidempiä ja harvinaisempia. Itsenäiset väritermit kuvaavat auton väriä, joten käytetyn väritermin halutaan olevan mahdollisimman ainutlaatuinen ja huomiota herättävä.

Avainsanat: mainoskieli, automainokset, premodifikaatio

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## 1 Introduction

This thesis is a study of premodification in printed second-hand car advertisements. The term *premodifier* refers to words that modify the head noun and are placed before it, as, for example, the words *chrome* and *stunning* in *chrome wires* and *stunning condition*. I will study both syntactic and semantic features to find out how premodification in second-hand car advertisements is similar to advertising language in general and how it possibly differs from it. I chose to study car advertisements because cars are a clearly defined and a much-advertised group. Cars have many different features and they are expensive, so car advertisements have to give enough information and be effective at the same time. Printed car advertisements have been studied before but earlier studies have focused mostly on advertisements for new cars, and that is why it is interesting to study how the language in second-hand car advertisements possibly differs from them.

Advertising language as a topic is very interesting, because advertising does not actually have a language of its own, but effective advertisements are created using everyday language in an innovative way. As Leech (1966, 151) notes, one of the defining features of advertising language is the frequent use of adjectives. Dyer (2008, 308) agrees with him when she writes that adjectives and adverbs are the key words of advertising language. She explains that these words are important because “they can stimulate envy, dreams and desires by evoking looks, touch, taste, smell and sounds without actually misrepresenting a product” (ibid.). According to Leech (1966, 139), premodifying adjectives can be used both attributively and designatively, that is, either to add a description, as in *black interior* and *long bumpers*, or help to identify the noun, as in *electric hood* and *American classic*.

According to Leech (1966, 135), long compound adjectives are “perhaps the most conspicuous characteristic of advertising language to a casual reader”, which is one of the reasons why the premodifying sequence is the most interesting part of advertising language (ibid., p. 127). As Rush (1998, 163–4) writes, sequences combining several types of premodifiers are very useful

in advertising language. This is because there are only a few limitations for combining premodifiers and thus creating unique combinations. Leech (1966, 140) writes that combined premodifiers are used in advertising language to express a single quality, which is why unique combinations of premodifiers are, as Dyer (2008, 308) writes, used in advertisements to “suggest that the product has a special feature it alone possesses”. This is why premodification is a relevant feature of advertising language and thus worth studying.

I will start my thesis with some background information about advertising in Section 2 by presenting some definitions of the term *advertisement*. After that the most central advertising principles and some of the most important features of advertising language are discussed. Then I consider the possibility that second-hand car advertisements can form a subgenre within a larger genre of advertising. After that, premodification will be discussed in detail in Section 3. I will start the discussion by studying which words can function as premodifiers, and then continue by discussing the importance of complex premodifier sequences in advertising language. The structure and the order of premodifiers within a sequence are also studied. Section 3 will end with a brief presentation of the use of colour terms in advertising language.

In Sections 4 and 5, I will present the material and methods employed in the present thesis, which is a case study of premodification in the second-hand car advertisements collected from two classic car magazines, *Classic & Sports Car* and *Octane*. I will first study syntactic and then semantic features of premodification by answering the following six research questions:

- 1) How many words occur before the head noun in the premodifying sequence?
- 2) In what order do the words occur before the head noun in the premodifying sequence?
- 3) What kind of coordination is used in the premodifying sequence?
- 4) How common are the different semantic groups based on function in the analysed advertisements?
- 5) How many of the premodifying sequences combine different semantic groups?

6) What are the commonest words in these semantic groups?

In addition to the above, the use of colour terms will be studied with a focus on the following research questions:

7) How many words do the colour terms contain?

8) Are the used colour expressions mostly conventional or unconventional?

9) What are the most common colour expressions used in the second-hand car advertisements?

The results of the analysis are discussed in their own subsections and presented with the help of tables and illustrative examples.

This thesis also contains a comparative subsection (Section 6.2) where a sample of advertisements for new cars will be analysed. This is because I study whether the premodifying patterns used in second-hand car advertisements differ from those used in advertisements for new cars, that is, whether second-hand car advertisements seem to have their own distinctive features and thus possibly form a subgenre within the larger genre of advertising. The advertisements for new cars were collected from the American car magazine *Car and Driver* and, since colour terms are not used in these advertisements, only research questions 1–6 will be discussed in Section 6.2. Finally, in Section 7, I will conclude the main findings of this thesis and present some ideas for further research.

## 2 Principles and Typical Features of Advertising

### 2.1 What Is an Advertisement?

According to Cook (1992, 13), advertisements are “everywhere but nowhere”. By this he means that we hear and see advertisements every day and still are unwilling to pay attention to them.

Myers (1994, vii) talks about the same phenomenon when he describes advertisements as complex

and ubiquitous in the sense that they have an important effect on “any model of how we communicate and of what we take for granted about society”. Goddard (1998, 2) also highlights the effect of advertising when she writes that we like to think that advertising does not have an effect on us, although it actually has. Cook (1992, xiv) points out that it is not easy to write about advertising, because it is constantly changing. He (*ibid.*, 3) adds that many studies on advertising focus solely on language, although advertisements often combine pictures and music as well, which makes the study of advertisements even more challenging.

But what, then, is an advertisement or advertising? There are several definitions. For example, Rein (1982, vii) writes that the term *advertising* has a more precise meaning for professionals of marketing, but that for an average person advertising means “any effort that helps to sell the product”. Rein continues by writing that advertising can be seen as a means of communication to target audience (*ibid.*, p. 3). An advertisement has to communicate, inform and persuade customers (*ibid.*, p. viii) in order to change their feelings towards the product, increase their knowledge about it and, most importantly, make them behave towards the product in a certain way (*ibid.*, p. 15).

Goddard (1998, 6–7) writes that classifying texts as advertisements is not always straightforward as texts are seldom only informative or persuasive. However, there are several writers who seem to define the function of the advertisement in quite a similar way. For example, Goddard herself (*ibid.*) points out that the central feature of advertisements seems to be that there is a conscious intention behind the text. According to her (*ibid.*, p. 11), the main function of copywriters is to “register their communication either for purposes of immediate action or to make us more favourably disposed in general terms to the advertised product or service”. Rein (1982, 95) puts it in this way: “Advertising creates an attitude that may lead to sales”, while Bex (1993, 719) states that the primary function of advertisements is to draw attention to the product in question and increase its consumption. Leech (1966, 26) writes that an advertisement has a very precise goal and

that advertisements usually are “honest in declaring their purpose” while Labrador et al. (2014, 38) state that advertisements have two important rhetorical moves: to identify the product and describe it in such a way that the potential customer wants to buy it.

There are different kinds of advertisements. For instance, Rein (1982, 62) writes that the design for an advertisement depends on the medium that will be used. Cook (1992, 9–11) categorises advertisements into groups based on their media, product, consumer or technique. For instance, a hard-sell technique tries to sell the product directly by highlighting its good qualities while a soft-sell technique tries to affect the feelings and emotions of the customer. Leech (1966, 57–66) has a similar kind of approach when he categorises advertisements based on their product type, medium, audience and aims. Advertisements for services or enterprises, for example, do not necessarily try to make the potential customer act in a certain way (that is, to buy the product), but rather make them think positively about the company (ibid., pp. 64–5). According to Myers (2009, 461–2), advertising texts are changing. For example, mass media are fragmenting so that it is more difficult to target large audiences, and advertisements can be more easily avoided than before.

The present thesis studies print advertisements. According to Simpson (2008, 375), print advertisements are space-based whereas, for example, television advertisements are time-spaced. Print advertisements typically consist of the brand name, pictures, text and the reason to buy the product (ibid.). Rein (1982, 71) writes that print advertisements consist of four elements: illustration, headline, copy block and logo or symbol. Rein continues by noting that the function of the headline is to draw attention and therefore it must be somehow striking (ibid., p. 76), while the copy block or the text part of the advertisement has to satisfy the curiosity of the customer and suggest action (ibid., pp. 76–77). *Design* is the term used to describe how these elements are arranged on a page (ibid., p. 78). According to Rein (ibid.), there must be one focus point, as, for example, a picture. Leech (1966, 59) divides the parts of an advertisement into four components as well. These are headline, body copy [same as Rein's copy block], signature line or brand name, and

standing details, which refer to, for example, legal notes in small print at the bottom of the advertisement. Even if Leech has different components than Rein, he also writes (*ibid.*) that these components have their own functions, which is why they manifest different linguistic features.

Pictures are an important part of print advertising. Goddard (1998, 114) writes that pictures “work alongside the verbal text to create a whole reading”. She also points out that neither the text nor the pictures work well in isolation (*ibid.*, p. 16). According to Rein (1982, 72), pictures are used to capture the attention of the customer and to show the benefits of the product. He points out that especially photographs are effective because they bring realism to the advertisement. As Goddard writes (1998, 15), whenever an advertisement contains a picture of a human being, features of *paralanguage* can be used to interpret the picture. By this she means the aspects of non-verbal communication, such as body position, gestures or eye contact. Rein also writes about the importance of the colours (1982, 72). For instance, red, yellow and orange are warm and stimulating colours while green and blue are cool and relaxing.

Advertisements in magazines differ from those in newspapers. According to Rein (1982, 78), magazine advertisements are more long-lived than newspaper advertisements, which means that the former can be read many times even years after their publication. Advertisements in special interest magazines are often targeted to a certain social class, for example (*ibid.*, p. 16). Leech (1966, 128) writes that targeting is the reason why advertisements in special magazines can use a great amount of technical information or special terminology known to that specific audience. Specialised vocabulary requires that the audience is interested and has enough time to process the advertisement thoroughly (*ibid.*). Leech also writes (*ibid.*, p. 90) that different kinds of abbreviations are used frequently in advertising language. Both of these observations seem to apply to the material analysed for the present thesis as well, since specialised terminology and even more specialised abbreviations are used frequently in the advertisements analysed for the study.

## 2.2 Advertising Principles

As Myers (1994, 107) writes, advertising can be seen as a strategy because it is not everyday life. Goddard points out (1998, 11) that advertisements have to compete with each other and other kinds of texts, which, according to Myers (1994, 3), means that they have to be unusual and memorable. Myers also writes that copywriters have to place advertisements “where they are most likely to be effective” (2009, 458), and use innovative and playful solutions to attract the attention of the customers (ibid., p. 454). Ren and Yu (2013, 85) present two advertising principles: AIM and AIDA. According to the AIM principle, advertisements have to “grab readers' attention, arouse their interest, and construct their memory to achieve the ultimate goal of triggering their action” (ibid.). AIDA stands for Attention, Interest, Desire and Action. Rein (1982, 51) uses the same term and explains that the principle means that a good advertisement must capture the attention of the potential customers, hold their interest, make them want to have the product and finally make them act, that is, to buy the product. According to Bex (1993, 721), it is easier to attract the attention of the potential customer than to hold it. Leech (1966, 27) gives the following four principles that the advertisement has to accomplish in order to be effective:

1. It must draw attention to itself.
2. It must sustain the interest it has attracted.
3. It must be remembered, or at any rate recognised as familiar.
4. It must prompt the right kind of action.

He also points out that an advertisement has to be positive and unreserved (ibid., p. 30) in order to be effective.

Rein (1982, 51) presents another term relating to advertising strategies: Unique Selling Position. By this he means that the copywriter must be able to “create the difference”, that is, to tell how the product in question is somehow special. An advertisement should tell the customers what makes the product unique in a good way (ibid., p. 28) and what this particular product can do that its competitors cannot (ibid., p. 31). Goddard (1998, 105) calls the Unique Selling Position “the

quality that makes the product a 'must' to buy". Vestergaard and Schröder (2008, 329) point out that sometimes the product in question is not really unique in any way. In situations like this it is always possible to describe the qualities of the product, as, for example, say that a soap is transparent or that a toothpaste has stripes (ibid.). Ren and Yu (2013, 86) make an important addition by noting that information in advertisements is always incomplete, as they only contain as much information as the copywriter thinks the customer needs to know in order to buy the product. It is also worth noting that, as Myers (1994, 9) and Cook (1992, xv) write, advertisements can annoy readers. Dahlén and Edenius (2007, 35) highlight the point further by stating that advertisements can be avoided if they are recognised as such. This is why one of the advertising strategies is not to look like an advertisement at all, which Leech (1966, 101) calls role borrowing. Dahlén and Edenius (2007, 35) write that if this strategy succeeds, the attitude of the potential customer may be more tolerant and positive.

One of the important choices in advertising is the distinction between *reason advertisements* and *tickle advertisements*, which Simpson (2008) presents in his text. According to him, the message in advertisements can be direct or indirect (ibid., p. 372). Reason advertisements convey their message directly by appealing to "clinical truth, facts and needs of the customer" (ibid.). Product placement in reason advertisements is often clear and there is an explicitly expressed reason to buy the product (ibid., p. 375). The message is "invariably plain, simple and unequivocal – a message which, literally, leaves nothing to the imagination" (ibid., p. 381). Tickle advertisements, on the other hand, appeal to "emotions, desires, imagination and poetic truth" (ibid., p. 372). According to Simpson (ibid., p. 383), tickle advertisements may be unclear so that the customer has to think more to understand the message. For instance, a tickle advertisement can convey its message through a narrative structure. Simpson points out that although the reason/tickle distinction resembles the hard-sell/soft-sell distinction, the connection is not always clear (ibid., pp. 386–7) and all advertisements contain both reason and tickle (ibid., p. 372). Myers (1994, 24) talks about the

same thing when he presents some advertisements that have been able to increase sales by appealing to feelings rather than real need:

All these innovations [that is, these new types of soap advertisements] draw on the simple idea that if one is selling soap, one's markets are limited, because the world can only use so much soap. But if one is selling better life, there will be endless markets, because people can always be dissatisfied. The appeal was not BUY OUR SOAP but rather BUY a better life by buying OUR SOAP.

This extract illustrates the difference between the two strategies, since these advertisements have succeeded when they have switched from reason to tickle.

### 2.3 General Features of Advertising Language

As Myers (2009, 454) points out, advertising does not have a language of its own. This is why, as Labrador et al. (2014, 40) write, copywriters are “exploiting language resources to maximum”. Or, as Rush (1998, 170) puts it, “advertising English merely exploits the possibilities of constructions already found in discursive English”. According to Dyer (2008, 299), the language of advertisements can sometimes be even more important than pictures. She continues by explaining that advertising language is loaded: it aims to attract the attention of the customers and tries to make them more favourably disposed towards the product. It is important that advertisements can be repeated and remembered (*ibid.*), and that is why advertising language in general is informal and colloquial (*ibid.*, p. 303). Leech (1966, 83) states that the general rule of advertising language is that it should be simpler than the language used elsewhere in the same publication, which is why simple, personal and concrete language usually works best in advertising (*ibid.*, p. 75). Goddard (1998, 37) notes that written advertisements often “use aspects of spoken language to achieve their effects”. Rein (1982, 87) agrees with her when he writes that in advertisements it is best to use natural and conversational language. This means, for instance, the use of short sentences, familiar words and contractions (*ibid.*, p. 77).

In advertising language every word matters, so that, as Goddard (1998, 106) writes, words in

advertisements are chosen carefully to “promote positive associations”. As an example she presents pairs like *cheap* versus *economical* and *common* versus *universal*. Dyer (2008, 308) calls adjectives and adverbs *trigger words* because “they can stimulate envy, dreams and desires by evoking looks, touch, taste, smell and sounds without actually misrepresenting a product”. She continues by writing that especially vague premodifying adjectives such as *elegant*, *superb* and *enchanting* can be used quite freely, as they are always a matter of opinion. When using premodifiers like this, the copywriter does not lie but highlights the good qualities of the product in question. Dyer (*ibid.*, p. 300) also points out that words do more than describe things: “they communicate feelings, associations and attitudes – they bring ideas to our minds”. According to her, words that are almost synonyms involve different kinds of associations. As an example she gives *obese*, *fat*, *chubby* and *well-built* (*ibid.*). The copywriter will choose the word that contains the most attractive, or in this case, the least unpleasant associations.

Dyer notes that advertisements “break the rules of language for effect” (2008, 299). Myers (2009, 454) calls this “the use of unexpected stylistic choices” while Ren and Yu (2013, 86) talk about *deviation*, which they define as “selection of a linguistic item outside the range of normally allowed selections”. According to Myers (2009, 454–5), there is orthographic, morphological, lexical, syntactic and pragmatic deviation. Deviation can be, for example, the innovation of new words (*ibid.*), the usage of abbreviations and disjointed grammar (Dyer 2008, 303), the use of rhyming words or homographs (Ren and Yu 2013, 87) and the use of different font sizes, capitals and unusual punctuation (Goddard 1998, 17). As a result of deviation, advertisements can often be, as Goddard (*ibid.*, p. 10) notes, quite complex. They require customers to think (*ibid.*) and sometimes they are really teasing the brain (*ibid.*, p. 108). Simpson (2008, 388) thinks that this is a good thing as people enjoy decoding advertisements in the same way that they might enjoy completing a crossword. McQuarrie and Mick (2008, 408) also agree that effortfully processed information can be more easily remembered, but they also point out that it is not always easy to tell

when the advertisement may be too demanding for customers.

In principle, there are no limitations to the possible linguistic violations (Leech 1966, 176), which is why figurative or playful language is one of the major features of advertising language. Playful language can be defined as being opposite to norm (Ren and Yu 2013, 86) or as unorthodox use of some norm (McQuarrie and Mick 2008, 393). According to Goddard (1998, 60), brand new words as well as adaptations of some existing words and grammatical rules can be defined as figurative language. As Dyer (2008, 310) writes, figurative language is used in advertisements because it draws attention to itself. Simpson (2008, 383) notes that different kinds of word plays are effective because when customers need to think hard in order to understand the advertisement, they are participating in it. McQuarrie and Mick (2008, 398) suggest that advertisements containing figurative language are more easily remembered. According to them (*ibid.*), consumers may enjoy reading these kinds of advertisements and thus develop a positive attitude towards the advertised product. They also write that figurative language always contains some additional meanings (*ibid.*, p. 395). As an example they present an example where plaster is advertised with the headline “Say hello to your child's new bodyguards”. This only makes sense if customers recognise the additional meanings – such as the plaster being strong, providing protection and treating “your child like a celebrity” – and combine them into one idea (*ibid.*). In this way it is also possible to convey many meanings in a small space.

The list of features defined as figurative or playful language is almost endless. For example, Dyer alone writes about double meanings, puns, alliteration, metaphors, personification, metonyms, synecdoche, homonyms, parallelism and deliberate misspelling (2008, 310–3). Ren and Yu (2013, 87) add sound symbolism and Vestergaard and Schröder (2008, 331) mention the use of scientific abbreviations, while Goddard (1998, 43) notes repetition. Cook (1992, 140) introduces compounding, affixation, clipping, blending and conversion while Leech (1966) writes about neologisms (*ibid.*, p. 178), personification (*ibid.*, p. 183) as well as rhymes and vowel harmony

(ibid., p.188). The list could easily be continued because copywriters always have to use imaginative language to create unique and new expressions.

#### 2.4 Techniques of Addressing the Audience

As Myers (1994, 78) points out, advertisements have to address a great number of readers at the same time. This, as Goddard (1998, 2) notes, means that advertisements require participation from the customers. According to Rein (1982, 77), this can be done by making the message personal. Customers can be addressed directly (Vestergaard and Schröder 2008, 325), or they can be “defined less by explicit name and more by the qualities and the values they are thought to possess” (Goddard 1998, 31). One technique to address the consumers is to choose an effective tone of voice. As Dyer (2008, 301) points out, customers usually prefer a pleasant or friendly voice. However, the voice has to be reliable as well (Goddard 1998, 54). According to Goddard (ibid.), these two aspects can be achieved if the voice does not sound too authoritative but rather like “a friend who just happens to be an expert”.

Shared information can also be used as a way of addressing the audience. For example, deictic expressions can be seen as the use of shared information because when they are used, as Goddard writes (ibid., p. 41), both participants of the conversation, in this case the copywriter and the consumer, know what or who is being referred to. Vestergaard and Schröder (2008, 330) present a technique which aims to appeal to generally valued goals. The product can be said, for example, to fight pollution or save energy so that the consumers feel it is the product just for them. However, as Goddard points out (1998, 80), it is important to notice that different cultures value different things. She continues by citing an example by Brierley, according to whom Volvo unsuccessfully tried to promote their car with one advertisement in the whole of Europe, but succeeded when they marketed the car's safety for the British and the Swiss, status for the French, economy for the Swedes and performance for the Germans (Brierley, in Goddard 1998, 80).

As Myers writes (1994, 79), pronouns can be used in advertisements to make them personal.

Especially the pronoun *you* is used frequently, as Leech (1966, 81) notes. *You* in advertisements can be either specific or the so called *empty you*, which means that it has a very broad definition and could refer to anyone (Myers 1994, 80). According to Goddard (1998, 31), this kind of *you* can make the customers behave in a certain way: “In wanting to be a certain kind of person as we read and interact with the text, we become narratees – in other words, we position ourselves in the way the text wants us to”. The first person pronouns *I* and *we* are also used, often to refer to the company. According to Myers (1994, 82), *we* can be used inclusively, often to express solidarity between the copywriter and the customer, or exclusively when, for example, trying to make the image of a huge corporation more personal as in the example “At McDonald's, we do it all for you” (ibid.). Goddard (1998, 30) points out that the pronoun *we* can create a impression of an authority talking: “we are the authors of this text, we have opinions and we are telling you what they are”. According to Myers (1994, 83–84), the pronoun *I* can also be used to refer to the potential customer as in “It's Not Everyone's Choice of Company Car But It's Mine.”

As Leech (1966, 110) notes, interrogatives and imperatives are frequently used in advertisements. They are used to make the message of the advertisement personal, as if someone was talking directly to the customer (Myers 1994, 48). Leech (1966, 80) points out that in advertisements it is possible to use even imperatives that would be seen rude if used in everyday conversation. For example, the word *please* is seldom used. Vestergaard and Schröder (2008, 330–1) note that the word *buy* is rarely used in advertisements because it may sound a little too direct. Instead obvious synonyms such as *use*, *take*, *choose*, *try* and *get* are often used (ibid.). Interrogatives are another sentence type used to address the readers. Myers (1994, 49) writes that they resemble a ringing phone in the sense that they require an answer from the customer, which is why they are so effective. Goddard (1998, 106) notes that interrogatives are often used in headlines. She calls this a problem-solution format: the interrogative headline functions as a hook that attracts the attention of the customer, and then the copy block answers the question by telling the customers

why it is just this product that can best solve the problem.

As Myers (1994, 56) notes, copywriters sometimes use incomplete sentences that the potential customer has to complete in order to understand the advertisement. He illustrates this with an example: “More than lengthening. More than thickening. More than separating.” Here the customer needs to complete the sentences with something like “If you need...”, “This product is...” or “For those who want...” (ibid.). The reason, as Myers (ibid., p. 56) puts it, is “to suggest that we already have these desires, that they are completing our own thoughts”. As a result of using incomplete sentences, advertisements often have *ellipses*. Goddard (1998, 42) defines ellipses as elements that are left out and notes (ibid., pp. 60–1) that full sentences are rarer in speech and that is exactly why incomplete sentences are used so often in advertising language. Cook (1992, 112) describes the same phenomenon as “one half of a conversation”, which means that the text becomes interactive or communicative (ibid.) so that it, according to Goddard (1988, 61), resembles face-to-face conversation, and thus addresses the reader. According to Simpson (2008, 372), this conversational style is very effective in advertisements, since the customer may participate in the “conversation” if everything is not spelled out. And, if the customers participate, they are more likely to act, that is, to buy the product in question (ibid.).

## 2.5 Advertising as a Genre?

As Bex (1993, 719) writes, texts that have similar kinds of features such as, for instance, language choices or social functions (ibid., p. 728), can form a genre. Bax (2011, 26–7) writes that genres are mental concepts in the sense that they are only prototypes. According to him (ibid., p. 45), genres are ideal while real texts are actual. This is why it is not straightforward to categorise texts into different genre types, and Bax (ibid., p. 46) states that it is impossible to create a perfect categorisation system for genres. However, it is possible to categorise genres to some extent. For example, Cook (1992, 4) writes that texts can be categorised into different genre types based on their situation, function, participants, text type and so on.

According to Bax (2011, 36), genre schemas are used to interpret texts. By this he means that texts are not interpreted in isolation, but in relation to other texts that share, for example, similar layout, lexis and grammar (ibid., p. 44). This, as Cook writes (1992, 4), is what happens when we see or hear advertisements: new advertisements are processed by using earlier experiences with advertisements. Dahlén and Edenius (2007, 33) write about the same phenomenon when they state that people create “mental shortcuts” in order to be able to process the great number of advertisements they face every day. They call these shortcuts *advertising schema* after Friestad and Wright, and write that the context can affect consumers' reactions. Bax (2011, 44) notes the same thing when he writes that, for example, a title can evoke certain kinds of expectations. For instance, the majority of the material analysed in the present thesis appears on the pages labelled as “Dealer's showcase”, which makes the readers expect certain kinds of texts.

As Cook (1992, 5) writes, advertisements are usually defined as one genre or discourse type based on the fact that the function of all advertisements is to persuade, even if all of them do not aim to sell products. Bex (1993, 717) states that advertisements perform the same social function through different text types. By this he means that, regardless of variation, all advertisements belong to the same genre (ibid., p. 722). Bex (ibid., p. 725) continues by presenting the most important tasks of advertisements. An advertisement should “make clear mention of what is available for sale, evaluative claims as to the quality of what is offered, and indicate how the goods and services can be obtained”. As Devitt (2004, 86) writes, there is “encouragement to conformity” among different genre types. She elaborates this by explaining that breaking a genre norm is always a risk. On the other hand, genres both “constrain and enable choices” (ibid., p. 138). This is especially true when talking about the advertising genre because, as Myers (1994, 6) writes, advertisements should be able to surprise the reader, despite the fact that they often are quite similar. Bax (2011, 148) puts it this way: “[t]he trick . . . is to conform to the genre norm but also stand out as different”.

Genres can often be divided into subgenres. Devitt (2004, 69) defines subgenre as “a type of text that some but not all expert members recognize and that has some distinctive linguistic and rhetorical features”. Bex (1993, 726) admits that advertising genre consists of several subgenres, but he thinks that the differences between subgenres are “differences of degree rather than of kind”. Bex writes that, for example, more space allows the copywriters to use more persuasion (*ibid.*, p. 727). Bax (2011, 51) writes that different subgenres often use special jargon when “referring to common and familiar actions and objects”, which is one way of dividing the texts into subgenres.

The present thesis studies the subgenre of car advertisements. Conley (2009, 37) writes that a car is seldom just a vehicle while Cook (1992, 101) highlights the fact that cars, together with perfumes, are very often “marketed and perceived as expressions of the self and of sexuality: a woman is her perfume, a man is his car”. Cook (*ibid.*, p. 103) continues by writing that car advertisements often mix reason and tickle. Conley (2009, 38) writes about the same phenomenon and states that, in advertisements, cars are often seen as both mundane technical objects and magical objects with symbolic meanings. He (*ibid.*, p. 44) notes that cars are never just fantasy objects as it is exactly the distinctive technical features that distinguish car models from each other (*ibid.*, p. 38) but, nevertheless, car advertisements still very often contain magic in the form of emotions or desire (*ibid.*, p. 44). As Conley (*ibid.*, p. 54) concludes, “this union of opposites is part of the appeal auto-mobility”.

Bruthiaux (1996) has studied second-hand car advertisements and he writes (*ibid.*, p. 121) that their typical structure often involves an identifying segment (which includes the make and the model of the car), a transactional segment (price of the car and contacting details), as well as a descriptive and an evaluative segment, which together describe the features of the car and praise it. Bruthiaux introduces some typical features of second-hand car advertisements. These are, for example, long adjective and nominal chains (*ibid.*, p. 79), unclear boundaries between different phrases (*ibid.*, p. 88) and expected lexical choices (*ibid.*, p. 35) as well as conventionalised

coordinated segments (ibid., p. 119). The last two concepts refer to the typical words and idioms that are used frequently in second-hand car advertisements, as every advertising genre contains words and expressions that are typical of especially that genre.

### 3 The Structure and Usage of Premodifier Sequences in Advertising

#### 3.1 Definition of a Premodifier

According to Quirk et al. (1984, 902), “lexical and grammatical items of a wide range and indefinite complexity and interrelationship can precede a noun head” and function as a premodifier. The writers continue by listing different types of premodifiers (ibid., pp. 902–3). These are adjectives, participles, s-genitives, nouns, adverbial phrases and, in some cases, even full sentences. In general, scholars do not fully agree which grammatical classes are acceptable as a premodifier and which are not. For example, Bache (1978, 15) writes that adverbs cannot function as premodifiers while Huddleston and Pullum (2006, 535) include them among pre-head modifiers, and Rush explicitly states that advertising English is characterised by “frequent use of vivid premodifying adverbs”. Adverbs can premodify either the head noun or the following premodifiers, as in the fictional examples *an off day* and *a very nice day*.

Many scholars agree that determiners are not premodifiers. For instance, Biber et al. (1999, 258–82) state that determiners like articles, possessive determiners, demonstratives, quantifiers, numerals, the so called semi-determiners, like *same*, *other*, *last* and *next*, as well as wh-determiners are not classified as premodifiers. As Biber et al. write (ibid., p. 574), genitives are slightly problematic because some of them resemble premodifiers while others function more like determiners. But, as Leech (1966, 128) notes, “[p]remodifiers which can have the designative, or categorising function are nouns, adjectives and compounds”, which is why they are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

### 3.1.1 Adjective Premodifiers

According to Arnaud (2010, 304), it is most often impossible to “form a mental image” of an adjective in isolation, unlike the image of a concrete noun. This means that adjectives in general have to be “associated together with other discourse elements” (ibid.). Teyssier (1968, 225–6) talks about the same phenomenon when he writes that “the adjective is a mere semantic addition” which needs a noun to fully function. Arnaud (2010, 305) writes that in attributive position, that is, when functioning as a premodifier, adjectives can categorise or qualify the head noun.

In advertising English, premodifying adjectives are frequently used because, as Leech (1966, 129) puts it, they can be used to create a “glowingly attractive description”. He writes (ibid., p. 57) that there are some common adjectives that are used in most types of advertising. In addition to that, there are adjectives that are specific to different product groups. According to Leech (ibid., p. 152), the adjectives *good* and *new* are used twice as frequently as any other adjective in advertising, and especially *new* “cannot be used too often”. What is missing from advertisements are the “pejorative counterparts” of those adjectives, which means that adjectives like *bad* or *old* are not typically used in advertising (ibid.). Leech also writes (ibid., p. 133) that comparatives and superlatives are used frequently, especially the forms *better* and *the best*. Goddard (1998, 104) agrees and elaborates the point by stating that comparisons do not always have a reference, and illustrates this with the example “X washes whiter”. According to her, customers are used to completing comparisons like this as “X washes whiter than ever before” or “X washes whiter than everything else” so that copywriters can leave the points of comparison out. In this way the customer is subconsciously participating in the creating of the advertisement. Leech (1966, 160–1) calls these *unqualified comparatives* and writes that they are so vague that they are almost meaningless, and that this kind of vagueness resembles spoken language.

### 3.1.2 Noun Premodifiers

As Quirk et al. (1984, 240) state, nouns can also premodify other nouns. Biber et al. (1999, 592) write that they are especially common in news and academic register, where they are very productive. The writers (*ibid.*, pp. 590–1) list 14 different possibilities that a “noun + noun” relation can express. These are, for example, objective, subjective, temporal, locational and partitive relations. Arnaud (2010, 303) writes that some nouns are used as premodifiers so often that in dictionaries they may be assigned a subentry labelled as *modifier*. There are some restrictions to noun modifier usage. For example, plural nouns are not usually used as premodifiers but they become singular, as the word *arms* in *armchair* (Quirk et al. 1984, 914). According to Leech (1966, 134), premodifying nouns most often are designative, that is, classifying or categorising. He adds that often the combination of two nouns in an advertisement expresses rather technical information (*ibid.*, p. 140).

Huddleston and Pullum (2006, 1644) present an essential problem when they write that it is sometimes difficult to draw the boundary between compounds and constructions of two nouns. Bauer (1998, 65–6) agrees and mentions that people can be divided into “splitters and lumpers” because some see these combinations as one and some as two words. There are several criteria that have been suggested for making the distinction between compounds and syntactic constructions. Bauer (*ibid.*, p. 68) writes that three of them are based on the lexicalisation of words. The first criterion is orthography, because compounds are often written as one word. However, Bauer reminds that this is not a very reliable criterion, as English spelling is very inconsistent when it comes to compounds and compound-like units. Leech (1966, 135) as well as Matthews (1991, 94) specifically state that spelling is not a sufficient basis for the distinction. Another criterion related to spelling is the suggestion that if a compound is an independent word, it should have a dictionary entry of its own, but Bauer (1998, 67) notes that this is not a satisfying criterion, either. The third criterion related to lexicalisation status is stress. Bauer (*ibid.*, p. 70) writes that compounds have

fore-stress, which means that the stress of a compound is on the first element. However, this is not a very reliable criterion, since Bauer (ibid.) notes that not everyone stresses words the same way.

Bauer (1998, 83) thinks that criteria based on syntactic features are more reliable than those based on lexicalisation. He (ibid., pp. 72–8) presents three such criteria while Huddleston and Pullum (2006, 449–50) present five syntactic tests to distinguish a compound from a syntactic construction. The first of their tests is based on the fact that coordination in the modifier is only possible in syntactic constructions, as in [*new and used*] *cars* when compared to the ungrammatical \**[ice- and custard] creams*. According to the second test, coordination in the head noun is only acceptable in syntactic constructions. This is demonstrated with the construction *new [buses and cars]*, which is grammatical, while the corresponding compound is not: \**ice-[lollies and creams]*.

The third test is based on *delayed right constituent coordination*, which refers to a construction where “the constituent which in basic coordination would appear as the rightmost element of the first coordinate is held back until after the final coordinate” (ibid., p. 1343). The writers clarify this with a sentence which is first in basic coordination, and then in delayed right constituent coordination:

- i She knew of my other work but never mentioned it.
- ii She knew of but never mentioned my other work.

In the first sentence, *She knew of my other work* is the first coordinate and *my other work* is the rightmost element of it, which can thus be moved after the second coordinate. According to Huddleston and Pullum (ibid., p. 449), delayed right constituent coordination is only possible in syntactic constructions, since *four new cars and two used cars* can be expressed as [*four new and two used*] *cars* while the same is impossible with regard to compounds, as \**[two ice- and ten custard] creams* illustrates.

According to the fourth test, modification within the modifier can only be used in syntactic constructions, as the grammatical *two [reasonably new] cars* and the ungrammatical \**[crushed*

*ice]-cream* illustrate. In addition to that, as the fifth test proves, modification within the head is only possible in syntactic constructions. This is demonstrated with *two new [diesel-driven cars]*, which is acceptable, while *\*ice-[Italian cream]* is not. Huddleston and Pullum (ibid.) state that, “in principle, satisfaction of any of the tests is sufficient to demonstrate that a sequence of elements forms a syntactic construction”.

The problem with these different criteria and tests is, as Matthews (1991, 99) puts it, that “no criteria is irrelevant” while at the same time “no two tests give results that wholly agree” (ibid., p. 100). Matthews (ibid.) also points out that it would be “simple-minded” to believe that just one feature could distinguish all unclear cases. But, as Huddleston and Pullum (2006, 450) write, it is not necessary to abandon the whole theory just because there are some borderline cases that do not neatly fall into one of the categories. This is what encouraged me, for the purposes of the present thesis, to choose one criterion and be consistent with it, even if it was not entirely satisfactory. Despite the arguments presented against it, I chose to use orthography to distinguish compounds from “noun + noun” constructions. This is because, in regard to my research questions, it is not absolutely necessary to know if a noun phrase is a compound or not, because the first element nevertheless can be seen as modifying the second. It is also worth noting that Biber et al. (1999, 590) use orthography as their main criterion, which makes my results comparable with theirs.

### 3.2 Complex Premodification as a Feature of Advertising Language

Scholars like Biber et al. (1999, 579), Quirk et al. (1984, 916) and Bache (1978, 11) agree that, at least theoretically, there is no limit to the complexity of a noun phrase. However, they all admit that in practice there are some restrictions. For example, Bache (ibid.) writes that often the absolute maximum number of premodifiers is six or seven, and that it is unusual to have more than three premodifiers. Rush (1998, 164–5) notes that Bache's observations are quite accurate when talking about English in general, but that the situation is different in advertising English. For instance,

Leech (1966, 129) writes that a cluster of three premodifiers is perfectly normal in an advertisement. That is why Biber et al. (1999, 578) note that modifiers are not used equally often in all registers and Quirk et al. (1984, 933) point out that “anything approaching full exploitation of the potentiality existing in noun-phrase structure is relatively rare and relatively confined to specific styles of discourse”.

It can be said that long premodifier sequences are a typical feature of advertising English. Indeed, Rush (1998, 164) writes that a high number of premodifiers within a noun phrase is one of the most important features of advertising language, and Labrador et al. (2014, 44) state that the use of several premodifiers is a “notable resource” of advertising English. Leech (1966, 135) writes that long compound adjectives are “perhaps the most conspicuous characteristic of advertising language to a casual reader”, which is one of the reasons why the premodifying sequence is the most interesting part of advertising language (ibid., p. 127). Leech also writes (ibid., p. 137) that advertising English has quite flexible rules with regard to compounding, which results in complex noun phrases while the language of advertising is otherwise quite simple (ibid., p. 120).

Why, then, are complex premodifiers used so frequently in advertisements? One of the most important reasons is, as Leech (1966, 140) writes, that when premodifiers are treated like single words, they can be seen as single qualities, which, in Dyer's words (2008, 308), are used “to suggest that the product has a special feature it alone possesses”. Leech refers to compounds, but the idea applies to longer sequences as well, because, as Rush (1998, 169) writes, in advertisements it is possible to treat even clauses as if they were single adjectives that express a single quality. As examples she presents complex premodifiers such as *'Make Him Drop The Remote Control' Red* and *'Kick Down The Door And Bedazzle Him' Blonde*.

According to Leech (1966, 139), another reason to use premodifiers is the fact that the relationship between the premodifier and the head is not always clear. Biber et al. (1999, 588) illustrate this potential ambiguity by presenting the example *elephant boy*, which could be

paraphrased as “boy who resembles an elephant”, “boy who rides an elephant” or even “boy who takes care of elephants”. Leech (1966) writes that vague expressions like this are useful in advertisements, because they allow readers to make their own associations (ibid., p. 134) and “metaphorical connections” (ibid., p. 140). As can be seen from the paraphrases for *elephant boy*, premodifiers, as Rush (1998, 170) notes, are also used because of their brevity: they take less space than their postmodified counterparts. Biber et al. (1999, 589) write that in newspaper language brevity is often considered more important than explicitness, which is why journalists frequently use premodifiers, just as copywriters do.

However, probably the most important reason to use complex premodification is the need to attract the attention of the potential customer. Rush (1998, 164) writes that “copywriters are encouraged to use more unusual and bizarre formations to attract the consumer's attention”. Dean (1971, 230) points out that when making these kinds of unusual and innovative choices in the premodifying sequence, the writers are consciously breaking the rules for effect. Quirk et al. (1984, 902–3) put it as follows: “the flexibility of this type of premodification tends to be exploited only colloquially, and most examples have (and seem deliberately to have) a flavour of originality, convention-flouting, and provisional or nonce awkwardness”. The writers do not talk about advertising language, but the idea applies to advertising as well. This is because nonce formations, that is, words or phrases that are created solely for the purposes of a particular advertisement and only occurs in it, are used frequently in advertising language.

### 3.3 Structure of Complex Premodifying Sequences

If a head noun is premodified by several words, these words can occur in different kinds of constructions. One of the possibilities is the distinction between hypotaxis and parataxis. Halliday (1985, 198) writes that the relationship between words is paratactical if they are independent and free elements. The paratactical relationship is symmetrical, as in *salt and pepper*, which could as

well be *pepper and salt*. According to Halliday (ibid.), a hypotactical relationship consists of “elements of unequal status”. This kind of relationship is not symmetrical as the elements are “ordered in dependence”. Halliday illustrates this with *I breathe when I sleep*, which does not imply *I sleep when I breathe*. Halliday's examples are not from premodifier sequences, but the same relationships apply to premodifiers as well, as Bache (1982, 20) writes. He continues by explaining that in parataxis premodifiers modify the head separately, whereas in hypotaxis words are dependent on each other.

According to Bache (1982, 20), noun phrases containing several premodifiers can be *broken* or *unbroken*. In a broken construction, commas or conjunctions separate the words as in *a low, bewildered voice* or *this great and splendid city*. A broken construction is most often paratactical, because the premodifiers are independent and could occur in another order as well. There are no commas or conjunctions in an unbroken construction, as Bache's (ibid.) examples illustrate: *universally recognised scientific achievements* and *deep emotional scars*. This kind of a relationship can be either paratactical or hypotactical. Bache (ibid., p. 25) writes that the possible combinations of broken and unbroken constructions can form different kinds of subclasses, such as “unbroken + broken”, as in *that same relaxed, enjoying look*, or “broken + unbroken”, as in *strong, sweet black coffee*.

As Vandelanotte (2002, 222) points out, premodifiers can be “independently attributed to the head noun”, in which case they are coordinated. Coordinated premodifiers are linked to each other by using conjunctions or commas (ibid., p. 223). Vandelanotte (ibid., p. 229) writes that only adjectives of the same group can be coordinated. Such adjectives would belong to the same *zone*, a term which both Bache (1982; 32, 35) and Feist (2009, 305; 2012, 12) use, and which will be discussed in detail in Section 3.5. In short, for example, all descriptive adjectives belong to the same zone. Warren (1984, 99) claims that if two classifying adjectives premodify the head, they have to be coordinated, as in *This is a political and financial question*. Feist (2012, 12) questions

this by writing that if several words from one zone occur in the same premodifier sequence, they are *often* coordinated. Vandelanotte (2002, 226) notes that some kinds of words tend to be coordinated more often than others. For instance, colours and domain words are frequently coordinated, as can be seen from the examples *red and orange and yellow nasturtiums* or *local and regional and national levels*. Vandelanotte (ibid., p. 223) also notes that premodifiers can be partially coordinated. According to him, this means “attributing a number of qualities independently to a 'bracketed' unit”. Vandelanotte illustrates this by *a powerful, democratic political movement*, where the word *powerful* is separated from the words *democratic political movement*, which would be bracketed as one unit.

According to Bache (1982, 23), coordinated premodifier sequences can be either *distributive* or *non-distributive*. A distributive construction has two referents. As an example Bache presents *West European and Japanese leaders*, where the leaders obviously cannot be West European and Japanese at the same time, which means that there are two sets of leaders: from Western Europe and from Japan. In a non-distributive construction premodifiers refer to the same entity, as in *a slow, appreciative smile*, which can be paraphrased as *a smile which is both slow and appreciative* (ibid.). Bache (ibid., p. 24) also notes that some constructions can be ambiguous when taken out of context. He illustrates this with *red and white flags*, which can mean that there are flags that are only red or white, or that there are flags that contain both colours.

Vandelanotte (2002, 238) writes that if premodifiers are not coordinated, they most often represent recursive modification. This type of relationship means that premodifiers do not modify the head but each other (ibid.), and it can be called *submodification* (Halliday 1984, 171). Huddleston and Pullum (2006, 446) describe the same phenomenon as “a layered structure”, where “the modifiers modify the head successively rather than simultaneously”, which can also be called *stacked modification* or *stacking*. Biber et al. (1999, 597) also note that several premodifiers seldom modify the head directly. Rather, embedded relations are formed, where a premodifier modifies

another premodifier. The writers (*ibid.*, pp. 597–8) note that sometimes it is not clear which words all the premodifiers modify. As an example they give *two more practical principles*, which could mean either “two additional principles that are practical” or “two principles that are more practical”. According to Biber et al. (*ibid.*), most premodified noun phrases are, however, unambiguous.

### 3.4 Order of Premodifiers

As Feist (2012, 3) writes, most scholars are of the opinion that the positions of premodifiers are based on preferred order or tendencies. For example, Biber et al. (1999, 599) write that “[a]lthough there are no absolute rules governing the order of premodifiers, there are many strong tendencies”. Huddleston and Pullum (2006, 452) note that there are rigid and labile rules. The breaking of the former type results in an ungrammatical construction while the breaking of the latter results in a construction which is not preferred in the given context although it may work in others. For example, the order of the components within a noun phrase is rigid while the order within a premodifier sequence is labile (*ibid.*). Feist (2012, 8) notes that sometimes the preferred order may be ignored for stylistic effects.

Teyssier (1968) was one of the first scholars to define rules for the order of the premodified noun phrase. According to his model (*ibid.*, p. 229), the preferred order is “determinative [Teyssier's word for determiner] + identifying adjective + classifying adjective + noun”. Adamson (2000, 42) presents the same model with different terms and calls it the “canonical order”: “pre-adjectival modifiers [Adamson's term for a determiner] + adjectives + post-adjectival modifiers [Adamson's term for a classifying adjective]”.

There are several principles that affect the order of the elements in a premodifier sequence. One of them is based on relevance. Halliday (1985, 166) writes that the most specifying element comes first and permanent features come later, because the latter cannot identify the head noun in different contexts. Bauer (1998, 82) agrees when he writes that the most relevant element is often

closest to the head. Most often these are nouns. Biber et al. write (1999, 599) that modifiers closest to the head express attributes that are the most essential when identifying or classifying the head noun. This is why Warren (1984, 98) suggests that if two classifying adjectives occur in the premodifier sequence, their order is based on their informative value. Teyssier (1968, 232) notes the same principle and writes that the more classifying adjective appears closer to the head.

Another principle that has an effect on premodifier order is, in Bache's words (1978, 76), the “Principle of Length”, which mainly concerns adjectives. According to this principle, the shorter adjectives typically precede the longer ones. Vandelanotte (2002, 224–5) calls this the *law of increasing members* and points out that it is not only the number of syllables but also the morphological complexity that affects the order. For example, in *a bright, classy, cheerful restaurant* the word *classy* is placed after *bright* because it is derived from the word *class* with the help of a suffix, which makes it morphologically more complex.

Bache (1978, 73) also presents the “Principle of Emotional Load”, which means that emotional premodifiers tend to be placed before more concrete modifiers, such as adjectives denoting height and length. Bache notes that an order like this is based on a dependency relation. For instance, in *a nasty, cold wind* the wind is nasty because it is cold (ibid., p. 74). Ghesquière et al. (2013, 90–1) write that usually the premodifiers are arranged from more subjective to more objective ones. This view is represented in a model they give for the noun phrase (ibid.). From left to right the order is typically “determiner + degree modifier + subjective descriptive modifier + objective descriptive modifier + objective classifier + head noun”. The writers illustrate the model by presenting the example *some very good young English coaches*, which completely matches the model.

There are also many guidelines that are based on the semantic groups of adjectives. For example, Dixon (1982; 15–6, 24) writes that common adjectives that appear between the pre-adjectival and post-adjectival elements can be divided into seven groups. According to Dixon, if

two or more adjectives premodify the head, they typically occur in the following order: 1) value (such as *good, fine, poor*), 2) dimension (*big, narrow, fat*), 3) physical property (*hot, heavy, sour*), 4) speed (*fast, quick, slow*), 5) human propensity (*jealous, happy, clever*), 6) age (*new, young, old*) and 7) colour.

However, this is not the only possible order for the adjectives. Huddleston and Pullum (2006, 453–4) present their model, which is somewhat different from Dixon's version. According to them, the preferred order for premodifying adjectives is 1) evaluative (like *good, perfect, tasty*), 2) general property (*cruel, wise, rude*), 3) age (*young, old, modern*), 4) colour, 5) provenance (nationality or geographical proper names), 6) manufacture (material or mode of manufacture), 7) type (*winter coat, digestive biscuit*). Huddleston and Pullum (ibid.) illustrate the order with the example *an attractive tight-fitting brand-new pink Italian lycra women's swimsuit*, but in real life there are not many phrases that would actually contain a modifier from all these groups. The second category, General property, can be seen as quite broad, since the writers state that it contains adjectives that denote size, dimension, sound, touch, taste, and also human properties, which are separated in Dixon's model. It would be possible to find more guidelines for adjective order, but it would be beyond the scope of the present discussion to list them all here, because most likely they all are a little different. It is not surprising since these are tendencies rather than strict rules, as already mentioned.

### 3.5 A Closer Look at Feist's Theory

In the following section I will concentrate more on the theory by Feist (2009, 2012), because it will be used as the basis of the analysis in the present study. According to Feist (2012, 8), premodifiers can be divided into four groups based on their semantic function: classifiers, descriptors, epithets and reinforcers. These groups will be discussed in more detail below. It is worth noting that other scholars use these terms as well, but the following paragraphs focus mostly on Feist's theory,

because he explains the basis for the theory quite thoroughly, unlike many other writers.

According to Feist (2009), the distinction between these groups is based on five types of meaning. The first one is referential (ibid., p. 307). If a word has referential meaning, it can identify a referent, as proper nouns and many nouns do. The second type is descriptive meaning, which expresses either concrete or abstract qualities, as in *heavy* or *red* and *capable* or *correct*, respectively (ibid.). Feist (ibid., p. 318) writes that often descriptive meaning is based on perception, which means that such words denote, for example, how the head noun looks or feels. The third type of meaning is expressive meaning (ibid., p. 308). Words having expressive meaning can convey emotive meaning (words like *disgusting* or *horrible*), or attitudinal meaning. Feist (ibid.) illustrates attitudinal meaning by writing that “*tight-fisted* and *economical* can be used of the same behaviour to convey disapproving or approving meaning”. The fourth type is social meaning (ibid., pp. 308–9), which means that some words can convey a certain register or social class, as well as geographical and historical dialect. The fifth type of meaning is grammatical, which, as Feist (ibid., p. 309) puts it, is “what the word conveys of how it is to be related to other words” and can mean, for example, “subject-object relations” and intensification.

Feist (2009, 304) writes that “the overall order of premodifiers consists of four zones of premodification”. The term *zone* comes from Quirk et al. (Quirk et al., in Feist 2009, 304). In Feist's study the term *zone* means that the words of the four different semantic groups are placed in four different zones so that, for example, Zone IV only contains classifiers and can thus be called *Classifier zone*. As Feist (2009, 305) writes, one zone can contain several words. The words can sometimes be coordinated (ibid.), but according to Feist (2012, 4), the order within one zone is free.

Feist (ibid., p. 16) also writes that one word can occur several times in the same phrase. This is possible because words that appear in several zones have different senses. He illustrates this with the example *He's got very high high notes*, where the first *high* is a descriptor and the second one is a classifier. Feist (2009, 305–6) also illustrates the different senses of one particular word with

*smart*, which in *a smart blue silk bonnet* means something like 'fashionable', while in *the sophisticated new American smart bomb* it refers to a bomb that can be guided to a target. There are also some words that are on the border of the zones (ibid., p. 333). Often these words are changing or have been changing in some way. As an example Feist (2012, 2) presents the word *golden*, which has developed new meanings. According to Feist, the word used to mean that the object is made of gold, but nowadays it is also possible to use it for the colour gold, or in a more abstract sense to refer to great happiness. However, Feist (ibid., p. 16) points out that the distinction is based on certain word uses rather than lexical words. This means that a word in a particular use and sense belongs to only one zone at a time (Feist 2009, 333).

According to Feist (2009, 10), the words in the zone closest to the head are called *classifiers*. The primary function of classifiers is to denote a subclass (ibid., p. 11) or restrict the usage of the noun somehow (Biber et al. 1999, 509). Feist (2009, 317) illustrates this with *a silver ring*, where the word *silver* specifies the material the ring is made of. According to Feist (ibid., p. 312), classifiers have no descriptive meaning because the original meaning of, for instance, an abstract word, is lost when the word functions as a classifier. Feist illustrates this with *wisdom teeth*, where the word *wisdom* specifies the type of teeth rather than describes the teeth being wise. Similarly, in *a silver ring* the word *silver* does not actually denote perception, that is, what the ring looks like, but it specifies the type of ring. Apart from some special cases, classifiers have no expressive meaning (ibid., p. 314), which means that they only have a referential (ibid., p. 311) and a grammatical (ibid., p. 315) meaning.

According to Feist (2009, 312), classifiers cannot be graded. Other writers note this as well. For example, Halliday (1985, 164) writes that classifiers cannot be compared or intensified. Halliday (ibid.) states that classifiers may be either nouns or adjectives and that they can denote “material, scale and scope, purpose and function, status and rank, origin, mode of operation – more or less any feature that may serve to classify a set of things into a system of smaller sets”. Adamson

(2000, 56) writes that classifiers are the least subjective type of premodifier. According to Rush (1998, 160–1), classifying premodifiers are used in advertising English to give specific information about the product in question. Especially in speciality magazines the information expressed with the help of classifiers can be very technical (ibid.).

The zone next to classifiers in Feist's analysis is called *descriptors* (2009, 316). As the name suggests, descriptors have a descriptive meaning, which is why they are used to describe the quality or the state of the head noun. Adamson (2000, 56) writes that “[c]haracteristics [Adamson's term for a descriptor] neither delimit the class denoted by the noun nor identify the class-member being referred to by the speaker: rather, they specify some additional attribute of the referent”. As already noted, descriptors are often based on perception, which is why in *a silver car* the word *silver* describes the perception, that is, the colour of the car, since the car is not made of silver but it merely looks like it. Some additional examples of descriptors include words like *glittering* in *her long glittering crystal beads* and *three-tiered* in *a mammoth three-tiered wedding cake*. According to Feist, descriptors have no referential (ibid., p. 316) or expressive (ibid., p. 319) meaning.

Biber et al. (1999, 508) list some typical features that descriptors can denote. These are colour and brightness (words like *blue, black, dark, bright*), size, weight and extent (*huge, small, heavy, wide*), chronology, age and frequency (*annual, early, late, old*) as well as judgements, affect and emphasis (*bad, beautiful, lovely, poor*). In advertising English, descriptive premodifiers are used to appeal to the emotions of the potential customer, as Rush (1998, 161) notes. She also writes that while classifying premodifiers usually give information (ibid.), descriptive premodifiers are used to “create a special mood by their evocative content” (ibid., pp. 161–2). Most writers agree on descriptors being gradable. For example, Biber et al. (1999, 508) write that descriptors are “typically gradable” and Warren (1984, 94) writes that most but not all descriptive adjectives can be graded.

Feist (2009, 19) claims that descriptors are not gradable. This is because in his model,

descriptors are concrete and describe something that is either present or not (ibid., p. 322).

Therefore Feist presents the zone of *epithets*, which is situated next to descriptors. Like descriptors, epithets have no referential meaning (ibid., p. 321). They have a descriptive meaning, but Feist notes that often epithets express abstract features. For example, in *silver soprano singing voice*, the word *silver* does not denote perception (ibid.). The greatest difference between descriptors and epithets is the fact that the majority of epithets are gradable (ibid., p. 322). By this Feist means that they can be intensified by inflection (as in *bigger, biggest*), derived with suffixes like *-ish* (as in *blackish, greenish*) (ibid., p. 324), and submodified with words like *very* (ibid.). According to Feist, epithets can also have an expressive (ibid., p. 326) and a social (ibid., p. 327) meaning.

In my opinion, in some cases the difference between epithets and descriptors can be seen as potentially ambiguous. For instance, Feist (2009, 323) states that in *very young pregnant schoolgirls* the word *young* is used as an epithet, whereas in *hard young officer* it is used as a descriptor. Here, the distinction is quite clear, since the intensifying adverb *very* indicates that *young* can be intensified and thus classified as an epithet. But if the word *very* was not present, I find it difficult to decide whether *young* should be classified as an epithet (as not all epithets are graded or intensified) or a descriptor, since Feist (2012, 12) writes that it is quite possible, for example, to have two descriptors in the same phrase. Feist (2009, 329) admits himself that some epithets “are very close to the border of the Descriptor zone”. The majority of the writers do not make a difference between these two classes. Most writers do not use the term *epithet* at all, or use it in a different sense, as Halliday (1985, 163) does. This is why the use of epithets is not analysed in the present study but all words with descriptive meanings are analysed as descriptors.

Feist (2009, 329) calls the group farthest away from the head noun *reinforcers*. They differ from the other categories in that they only have an intensifying or a diminutive grammatical meaning, as in *utter disgrace* or *sheer arrogance* (ibid., p. 331). Reinforcers have no referential or descriptive meaning. Feist (ibid., p. 330) also writes that all reinforcers are more or less

synonymous with each other, apart from *mere*. Feist illustrates this by noting that the word *sheer* in *sheer arrogance* could be replaced with words like *complete* or *absolute*. Feist (ibid.) continues by writing that reinforcers have no antonyms, as it is impossible to say *\*incomplete fool*, for example. Reinforcers cannot be graded (ibid.), which together with the previous points means that they only have a grammatical meaning, although Feist (ibid., p. 331) admits that some of them may be slightly more informal and thus have a social meaning.

These four groups are naturally not the only possible way to categorise premodifiers according to their semantic function. For example, Ghesquière (2009, 312) writes about *emphasizers*, which “have modificational scope over the entire noun phrase . . . to their right”. As examples she gives *sheer madness* and *total rock star assholes*, where the words *sheer* and *total* would be categorised as reinforcers in Feist's (2009) model. According to Ghesquière (ibid., p. 317), the function of *emphasizers* is to “convey strong speaker feelings”. Adamson (2000, 56) writes that *identifiers* form one semantic group. Adamson categorises numerals and quantifiers as *identifiers*. She states that the function of *identifiers* is to identify nouns with determiners, which is why they are often called post-determiners. Warren (1984, 102–3) also uses the term *identifier*, but she uses it to refer to her own category of adjectives which are situated between classifiers and descriptors.

It is quite normal to use words from several zones in one premodifier sequence. Rush (1998, 163) calls these cases *compound premodifiers*, but it can be argued that the term is not very accurate, since not all of them actually contain compounds. Instead, the term *combined premodifier* will be used in this thesis, which reflects the combination of different categories. Nevertheless, these combined premodifiers are used very often especially in advertising language, because, as Rush (ibid.) notes, the possibilities for combining different words are unlimited. Dean (1971, 229) describes this as “a sort of do-it-yourself modifier rule”, because “a speaker may take almost any word, phrase, or even sentence and, on a strictly ad hoc basis, use it as a noun premodifier”, which may result in long and complex premodifier sequences.

As Leech (1966, 130) notes, combined premodifiers are frequently used in advertising, because they combine “praise and practicality”, that is, descriptors and classifiers, because

he [the copywriter] usually needs to include both in his message, and the more closely interwoven they are, the better. It is not his aim to help the public, as some newspapers do, by a rigid separation of fact and opinion.

Rush (1998, 163) also notes that these combined premodifiers can contain both descriptive and classifying premodifiers, in which case it is often the descriptor that precedes the classifier, not only in advertising but in standard English in general. Vandelanotte (2002, 231) notes that when a classifier is used together with descriptors, the premodifier sequence is often partially coordinated, as in *a raw, new outer-suburban school* (ibid., p. 232) or *an amazing long, powerful train* (ibid., p. 233). Vandelanotte suggests that in examples like these, “partial coordination may serve to separate interpersonal or subjective qualitative adjectives . . . from experiential or more objective ones”.

It is worth noting that Rush's term *compound premodifier* (cf. above) is to some extent adequate because the multi-word premodifiers in advertising English often contain compounds, as, for example, Labrador et al. write (2014, 44). Leech (1966, 138–9) lists nine types of adjectival compounds that can function as premodifiers, and also four types of compounds containing different embedded elements that are used in advertising. In addition to that, he points out that it is possible to use compounds that contain other compounds, as in *farmhouse-fresh*, *coffee-pot-fresh* and *brand-new-clean*.

### 3.6 Colour Terms

This thesis contains a section in which the colour terms used in the second-hand car advertisements are studied in more detail. This is because the lexical choices used to describe the colour of the cars are of special interest. As Frank (1990, 115) notes, copywriters of print advertising must be able to sell their products by only using words and pictures, which is why lexical choices really matter. She also writes (ibid., p. 123) that interesting colour terms in advertisements can be seen as a marketing

strategy because copywriters use words that are not used in everyday language (ibid., p. 124) to reflect “consumers' fantasies and sociocultural expectations” (ibid., p. 123). Frank also points out that even if pictures are used, they may be of bad quality (ibid., p. 122), which means that colours in print advertisements are not always represented accurately (ibid., p. 124).

Arnaud (2010, 308–9) writes that in addition to “underived Germanic adjectives like *green* or *yellow*” English colour terms can be, for instance, denominal adjectives (like *ashen* and *golden*), nominal units (*orange* or *rose*) and endocentric compound adjectives (*pitch black* or *cobalt blue*). The lastly mentioned group is what Frank (1990, 116) calls *unconventional colour terms*. They are used frequently since copywriters have to capture the attention of potential customers with unexpected terms because, as Frank (ibid., p. 121) notes, otherwise readers get bored. The novelty of the colour term may lead the reader to believe that the product in question is new and unique in some other way as well (ibid.). Frank (ibid., p. 116) points out that the need for novelty is so great that copywriters sometimes invent entirely new colour terms, but underived colour terms can also be modified. For example, a descriptor that describes hue, saturation or brightness can be used (ibid.), as in *dark blue* or *metallic green*, or then some other type of modifier can be used, as in *rose red*, *iceberg white* or *banana yellow* (ibid.).

In his study Steinvall (2002) divides English colour terms into two classes, Basic Colour Terms (henceforth BCTs) and Elaborate Colour Terms (henceforth ECTs). According to Steinvall (ibid., pp. 135–6), BCTs in dictionaries, for example, are often defined “with reference to natural objects”, which means that it is possible to find colours defined with the help of similes like *white as snow* and *red as blood*. The following colour terms are categorised as BCTs (ibid., p. 119) in Steinvall's study: *black*, *red*, *green*, *white*, *brown*, *yellow*, *silver*, *grey*, *blue*, *gold(en)*, *purple*, *scarlet*, *pink* and *orange*, which means that all the other colours are ECTs, including the modified versions of BCTs. Steinvall (ibid., p. 133) writes that when a colour term is defined with the help of another colour, it can be defined as an ECT. For example, *turquoise* is often defined as being a mixture of

blue and green. I am not entirely content with Steinvall's division, because, as Berlin and Kay note, suffixes like *-ish* can be added to basic colours only (Berlin and Kaye, in Dixon 1982, 20–1). This is why, for example, *greenish* is perfectly acceptable while *scarletish* is not. This observation affects the division I have used in the present thesis, and which is presented in more detail in Section 5.

#### 4 Material

This thesis will consist of a case study of the second-hand car advertisements found in two car magazines, and a part where I compare the language of these second-hand car advertisements to advertisements for new cars. The second-hand car advertisements are collected from two British car magazines, *Classic & Sports Car* and *Octane*, which both concentrate on classic cars. These two magazines were selected because they seem to be quite noteworthy in their area. Both magazines also have their own Wikipedia entries and are among those few British car magazines that are so widespread that they are accessible also in Finland, for example. The yearly circulation of *Classic & Sports Car* is approximately 65,000 copies while the corresponding figure for *Octane* is approximately 37,000 copies (Ponsford, 2015). Both magazines contain about 230–250 pages and are thus approximately equally extensive. I will analyse Volume 32, Number 11 of *Classic & Sports Car* (2014) and Issue 128 of *Octane* (2014). Both magazines contain a great number of car related advertisements. I decided to exclude advertisements for different kinds of auctions, car services, repairs, motor shows and other events and to concentrate on second-hand car advertisements alone.

The selected magazines contain both second-hand car advertisements from private individuals and advertisements from different dealers that sell several cars with one advertisement. In this thesis I am only interested in the dealer advertisements (see Picture 1 below). By the word *dealer* I refer to a company that buys second-hand cars, possibly repairs them and then sells them forward. In this thesis I have only examined the descriptions of the cars. This means that I have excluded other parts of the dealer advertisement. For example, in Picture 1 the excluded elements are the makes and models of the cars as well as the prices of them, and the name of the dealer, the

contacting details and the sentence “View these cars and 89 other classics at [web address]”. The reason why only dealer advertisements are analysed in the present thesis is that the different elements can be more easily separated, so that it is possible to focus solely on the descriptions of the cars. Although multimodality is an important factor of effective advertising, I will ignore the pictures and focus on the text in the second-hand car advertisements.

**SUSSEX SPORTS CARS LTD**

 <p><b>1990 CITROEN 2CV6</b> Superior original condition and just 41000 miles since new <b>£6450</b></p>	 <p><b>1991 LANCIA DELTA KAT</b> Supersprint SI - Outstanding original condition, recent complete engine rebuilt <b>£12,950</b></p>
 <p><b>1967 MERCEDES 250SE COUPE</b> Excellent restored condition, Webasto sunroof, known to us for 42 years <b>£39,950</b></p>	 <p><b>1955 AUSTIN-HEALEY 100/4</b> Sydney Motorshow Car - 1 owner from new and untouched condition <b>£64,950</b></p>
 <p><b>1967 TRIUMPH TR4A</b> Left Hand Drive, complete nut &amp; bolt restoration to better than new condition <b>£25,950</b></p>	 <p><b>1989 MERCEDES 300SL</b> Fabulous condition, just 55000 miles with full service record, electric hood fitted <b>£21,950</b></p>

**View these cars and 89 other classics at**  
[www.sussexsportscars.co.uk](http://www.sussexsportscars.co.uk)  
**Tel: 01273 477778**  
**Mobile: 07831 173729 Email: sussexsportscars@aol.com**

*Picture 1: An example of a dealer advertisement.*

For the purposes of this study I decided that, rather than analysing all dealer advertisements in the two magazines, it would be better to exclude some of them to make the material more homogeneous and that way more comparable. I decided to exclude those dealer advertisements that advertise for fewer than four individual cars, and those that include other means of transportation, such as tractors, motorcycles or Formula One racing cars. It is worth noting that the great majority of the dealer advertisements contain pictures of the cars on sale. To ensure that the material is as homogeneous as possible, the material was limited so that every analysed advertisement contains a picture of the car, but, since in this study I am only interested in linguistic features, my aim was to

ensure that visual or multimodal means do not affect the analysis. This is why all pictures in one dealer advertisement had to be of the same size and this way equal, as in Picture 1. Otherwise one larger picture might have worked as a visual strategy designed to catch the attention of the customer, which could potentially affect the text in the advertisement. Some advertisements appear in both *Classic & Sports Car* and *Octane*, in which case one of the occurrences was naturally excluded. After these limitations I have 34 dealer advertisements, 29 from *Classic & Sports Car* and 5 from *Octane*, which contain 271 individual second-hand car descriptions to analyse. A list of all 34 second-hand dealers whose advertisements are analysed in this thesis can be found in Appendix 1.

As mentioned above, this thesis also contains a comparative subsection, which is why I will analyse a sample of new car advertisements as well. The advertisements for new cars were collected from the issues of an American car magazine, *Car and Driver*, published during the year 2013. The February issue was unavailable, which means that eleven issues (from volume 58, number 7, to volume 59, number 6) were analysed. As with *Classic & Sports Car* and *Octane*, this magazine was chosen because of its apparent central role in its area. The magazine is widespread enough to be easily available in Finland and its yearly circulation is approximately 1,23 million copies (Alliance for Audited Media, 2015).

Admittedly, advertisements published in the United States may differ from those published in Britain. For example, Myers (1994) writes that British advertisements use more puns (ibid., p. 62) and different accents, such as French (ibid., 97). According to Cook (1992, xv), at the beginning of the 1990s, there were fewer advertisements in Britain, which is why they were tolerated better and even admired, whereas advertisements in the United States were considered more pervasive and aggressive and thus disliked. Cook (ibid.) admits that European copywriters may follow the example of their American colleagues, and it can be argued that the difference between American and European advertisements has diminished. It is also worth noting that the advertisements for new

cars are published by large multinational companies, and also include British car companies such as Jaguar and Land Rover. Despite the fact that both *Classic & Sports Car* and *Octane* are British magazines, they both also contain some advertisements from American and even Australian dealers, including, for example, Fantasy Junction (*Classic & Sports Car*, p. 197), Copley Motorcars (*Octane*, p. 202) and Classic Throttle Shop (*Octane*, p. 209). These two factors are the reason why I do not think that the possible differences between second-hand car advertisements and advertisements for new cars result from the place of publication.

As was the case with second-hand car advertisements, only the advertisements for cars, not car parts or other services, were analysed in *Car and Driver*. I excluded the advertisements that were longer than two A4 pages. When analysing the advertisements, only the copy block, that is, the actual text part of the advertisement was studied. This means that I have excluded the slogans of the car companies, such as “Inspired Performance” (Infiniti), “The best or nothing” (Mercedes-Benz) and “Find new roads” (Chevrolet). I have also excluded what Leech (1966, 59) calls *standing details* (see Section 2.1) Some advertisements appear in several issues but, naturally, every advertisement was only analysed once, which means that I have 62 advertisements for new cars to analyse. A list of all analysed advertisements for new cars can be found in Appendix 2.

## 5 Aims and Methods

The aim of this study is to examine premodifying patterns of nouns found in second-hand car advertisements. I will study the premodification sequences to see if they are similar to premodifying patterns of advertising English in general. My hypothesis is that while premodification in second-hand car advertisements most likely shares many features with advertising English in general, it may nevertheless have some distinctive features of its own. If such distinctive features are found, it could be argued that second-hand car advertisements can form their own subgenre. This is why the present thesis can be seen as a study examining one linguistic feature of a potential subgenre.

I will study the premodification of nouns in second-hand car advertisements by analysing both syntactic and semantic features. I will also analyse the use of colour terms in these advertisements in more detail. In addition to that, the thesis contains a subsection where I will compare the syntactic and semantic features of premodification patterns in second-hand car advertisements to advertisements for new cars. In the present section I will present the methods of my study by introducing my research questions and then discussing them in more detail.

Before continuing to the research questions, I will provide the definition for a premodified noun phrase employed in the present study. Although proper nouns such as names could be seen as noun phrases, I decided that one of the elements of a noun phrases analysed must be a common noun. This means that I have excluded sequences like *Adrian Reynard* and *Alex Jupe* in “chassis designed by Adrian Reynard” and “restoration by Alex Jupe” as well as “Louis Vuitton Bagatelle Paris” [the name of a car race]. By contrast, noun phrases like “Peter May engine” or “fabulous specification and condition Sagaris” are analysed in the present study, because they contain elements that are common nouns. I also decided to exclude noun phrases that have abbreviations as their head word. This is because I did not recognise all abbreviations and thus could not be certain if they were nouns or not, although in some cases the syntactic environment suggests that the head is in fact a noun, as in “new MOT” or “turned into practical DHC”. However, there are some ambiguous cases. For example, in the phrase “AUS del.” the abbreviation *del.* could refer either to *delivery* or *delivered*, which is no longer a noun but a participle. There are also some very obscure cases, such as “matching #s” or “3 speed plus O/D”, which is why all phrases that have an abbreviation as their head are left unanalysed in this study. Due to these limitations I analysed 1304 noun phrases in the advertisements for second-hand cars and 409 noun phrases in the advertisements for new cars.

The syntactic features of premodifiers of nouns in car advertisements will be studied with the help of the following questions:

- 1) How many words occur before the head noun in the premodifying sequence?
- 2) In what order do the words occur before the head noun in the premodifying sequence?
- 3) What kind of coordination is used in the premodifying sequence?

To answer the first question, I will count all the words that are used in the premodifying sequence before the head noun. Based on the theories presented above, I will consider the adverbs, adjectives, participles and nouns that are placed before the head noun as belonging to the premodifying sequence. As mentioned above, determiners such as quantifiers are not usually regarded as premodifiers, which is why articles or words like *all*, *many* and *much* have been excluded in this study. Neither are possessive pronouns such as *my*, *your* and *their*, nor genitives like *Mr. Smith's car* included. Demonstrative pronouns and numerals are also excluded. Numerals here refer to ordinal and cardinal as well as general numerals, that is, words like *last*, *next*, *previous* and *another*. Thus, in the invented example *The car's all three previous careful owners* only the word *careful* is analysed as belonging to the premodifying sequence.

The second question, concerning the order of premodifiers, will be answered by categorising the words in a premodifying sequence into six groups. Four of them are based on the categorisation by Biber et al. (1999, 588), who regard 1) general adjectives, 2) *-ed* participial modifiers, 3) *-ing* participial modifiers and 4) nouns as being the four major types of premodification. In addition to these four groups, I will include group 5) adverbs, and group 6) other word classes that may occur in the premodifying sequence. As these six groups can form numerous possible premodifying combinations, it is not relevant to list them all in the present study. For instance, it is quite easy to find long premodifying sequences like “Portland nimbus grey leather dash” or “Red Label Short Chassis Speed Model”, which most likely would be alone in their own categories. This is why only the most common tendencies and the most interesting exceptions will be presented with the help of some illustrative examples. The order of the premodifiers will be analysed by comparing the premodifier sequences in the advertisements to the theories concerning premodifier order presented

above in Sections 3.4 and 3.5.

The third question, about the occurrence of coordination, is loosely based on Bache's (1978) theory of broken and unbroken constructions (see Section 3.3) and the coordination found in them. However, Bache's theory cannot be applied as such to the present study. This is because the material contains too many cases that would be difficult to put into any of Bache's categories. Especially long premodifier sequences containing several commas or conjunctions such as “unique, very usable and extremely elegant collector's car” and “very sound, solid, & smart “Big Boot, Big Bore” Dawn” would become borderline cases. This is why the premodifying sequences in this study are divided into the following four groups: sequences that contain 1) conjunctions like *and* or *or*, 2) commas, 3) some other coordinating device (such as a stroke) and 4) sequences that do not contain coordination at all.

The semantic features of premodifiers will be studied with a focus on the following research questions:

- 4) How common are the different semantic groups based on function in the analysed advertisements?
- 5) How many of the premodifying sequences combine different semantic groups?
- 6) What are the commonest words in these semantic groups?

For the purposes of this study, I will limit the number of semantic functional classes to three. The analysis will be based on the theory by Feist (2009), who divides premodifying words into four functional classes: classifiers, descriptors, epithets and reinforcers. However, given the fact that the functions of descriptors and epithets are very close to each other, and that the majority of the grammarians consulted do not make a difference between these two classes, I will exclude epithets and include a descriptor class in a broader sense. This is also because in some cases the difference between epithets and descriptors can be seen as potentially ambiguous, as already mentioned in Section 3.5. This is why, in the present study, I will categorise the words in the premodifying

sequences into three groups: 1) classifiers, 2) descriptors and 3) reinforcers.

The fifth question, concerning the combinatorial possibilities, will be answered by categorising the premodifying sequences into four categories: those that contain 1) only classifiers (such as *factory air conditioning*, 2) only descriptors (as in *stunning original colours*), 3) only reinforcers (as in *absolute jewel*) and 4) those that combine different semantic classes and can thus be called *combined premodifiers*, such as the examples *amazing show condition* or *nice history file*. To discover the commonest words in each semantic group (question 6), I will count which are the most frequent words in each of the three semantic functional groups. After that I will compare typical adjectives found in them to lists of typical adjectives used in advertising that are presented, for example, by Leech (1966; 52, 152) and Goddard (1998, 105) to see if the adjectives in second-hand car advertisements differ from them in some way.

Finally, the analysis of the use of colour terms in the second-hand car advertisements focuses on these three questions:

- 7) How many words do the colour terms contain?
- 8) Are the used colour expressions mostly conventional or unconventional?
- 9) What are the most common colour expressions used in the second-hand car advertisements?

I decided to include the analysis of colour terms in this thesis, because when I was familiarising myself with the material, I noticed that colour terms are frequently used and they have some interesting features. Not all colour terms function as premodifiers but, nevertheless, I decided to analyse them all so that in the example “finished in black with tan trim” both the words *black* and *tan* are analysed, despite the fact that only the word *tan* functions as a premodifier. When analysing the results, I will study premodifying and non-premodifying colour terms separately in order to see if colour terms are used in a different way in the two syntactic positions.

The seventh research question will be discussed quite straightforwardly by dividing the

colour terms into three categories, those that consist of 1) one word (as *blue*, *navy* or *beige*), 2) two words (like *dark green* or *pale blue*) or 3) three or more words (such as *tawny bronze metallic* or *Old English White*), and then the results for premodifying and non-premodifying colour terms are compared. The eighth question is based on the categorisation by Steinvall presented earlier (see Section 3.6). In my categorisation, the colours *black*, *red*, *green*, *white*, *brown*, *yellow*, *silver*, *grey*, *blue*, *gold(en)*, *purple*, *pink* and *orange* are defined as Basic Colour Terms, which means that all the other colours are Elaborate Colour Terms. Finally, I will seek answers to the last question by calculating which colour terms are used the most frequently in the analysed second-hand car advertisements.

After answering all the research questions I will analyse a set of advertisements for new cars. When familiarising myself with the material, I noticed that colour terms are not used in these advertisements. This is why I will exclude the last three research questions when analysing advertisements for new cars, and only concentrate on questions 1–6. I will summarise the main findings and compare the results to see if the premodifying patterns used in second-hand car advertisements differ from those used in advertisements for new cars, that is, if second-hand car advertisements seem to have their own distinctive features and thus possibly form a subgenre within the larger genre of advertising.

## 6 Premodification in the Analysed Car Advertisements

### 6.1 Advertisements for the Second-hand Cars

In the following sections I will present the results of my analysis. The results will be discussed with the help of subsections so that every research question has its own subsection. As already mentioned above, I am going to start with syntactic features, then I will continue by presenting the results of the semantic analysis and finally present the results of the colour term analysis. The results will be

presented in tables where the numbers have been rounded to one decimal.

### 6.1.1 Number of Words Before the Head Noun in the Premodifying Sequence

In this section I will study how many words occur before the head noun in the premodifying sequence. It is worth noting that some of the analysed sequences contain words other than nouns, adjectives, *-ed* participles, *-ing* participles and adverbs. These may be, for example, numbers, conjunctions and prepositions. Nevertheless, if these words occur within a premodifying sequence, they are counted as individual words even if they are not analysed in any greater detail. This means that “famous 6 cylinder 2 liter AC engine”, “well documented service and ownership history” and “genuine knock on Halibrands” are analysed as containing six, five and three premodifying words, respectively. The results of this analysis can be seen in Table 1 below.

	number of sequences	percentage of all sequences
one word	668	51,2%
two words	383	29,4%
three words	161	12,3%
four words	56	4,3%
five words	25	1,9%
six words	7	0,5%
seven words	1	0,1%
eight or more words	3	0,2%
total	1304	99,9%

*Table 1: Number of words before the head noun in the premodifying sequence.*

As can be seen from the table, more than half, that is, 51,2% of all premodified noun phrases in advertisements for second-hand cars have only one word before the head noun. Biber et al. (1999, 597) write that, depending on the register, 70–80% of the premodified noun phrases have only one premodifier. The registers in their work are conversation, fiction writing, newspaper writing and academic prose. Premodifiers do not occur in all these registers equally often, but the writers note that, nevertheless, “all four registers are very similar in their proportional use of premodification by length” (ibid.). Compared to those registers, car advertisements clearly more frequently use noun phrases that contain several premodifiers. When only one word modifies the

head noun, the modifier is usually either an adjective or another noun. It is possible to find some typical one-word premodifiers in the advertisements for second-hand cars. For example, often the material or the colour of one part of the car is expressed by using just one word, as in “walnut dash”, “walnut veneers” and “metal bumpers” as well as “grey carpets”, “beige hide” and “tan leather”, respectively. There are also many one-word trademarks that modify the head, as in the following examples: “Bentley specials”, “Zeus brakes”, “Blockley tyres” and “Jaguar chassis”.

In the registers studied by Biber et al. (1999, 597), 20% of the premodified noun phrases contain two premodifiers. In the present study the number is a little greater, since 29,4% of the analysed sequences contain two premodifiers. In the material of Biber et al. (*ibid.*), only approximately 2% of the premodifier sequences contain three or more premodifiers. In my study the number is considerably greater, since three-word premodifiers alone occur in 12,3% of all analysed noun phrases. This is not very surprising, since according to Leech (1966, 129) “clusters of three adjectives” are used in advertisements quite often. The structure and semantic field of premodifiers consisting of two and three words will be discussed in more detail in Sections 6.1.2 and 6.1.5, respectively.

Premodifier sequences containing four words occur in as many as 4,3% of all analysed noun phrases. In many of these sequences, there are words that are not analysed in any greater detail in the present study, including, for instance, numbers: “fabulous specification 2 owner Tuscan” or “full 4 seater open tourer”. There are also many examples that are coordinated, such as “rare and unusual senior-series Packard” and “accurate and correct aluminium body”. However, surprisingly many of four-word premodifiers are clusters of four lexical words that are combined together without any grammatical words, for instance. Examples of this are “Portland grey half hide interior”, “Club Italia historic competition car”, “stainless steel sport exhaust muffler” and “full Bentley specialist service history”.

Noun phrases with five or more words in their premodifying sequence are used in

approximately 2% of all analysed noun phrases, which is about as much as the percentage of three or more premodifiers in the study by Biber et al. (1999, 597). As was the case with four-word premodifiers, there are premodifier sequences that contain words that are not subjected to a more detailed analysis in this study, as the numbers in “very rare Super 90 Drauz roadster model” or “twin turbo charged 2.85 litre flat-six engine”. When compared to four-word premodifiers, premodifiers consisting of five or more words seem to be coordinated more often, which obviously explains their length, as in the following examples: “very classic and elegant Rolls Royce”, “unique, very usable and extremely elegant collector's car”, “full dark blue leather & mohair hood” and “full Miura copy leather/velour interior”. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that even in this group there are many sequences consisting of only lexical words, such as “Jaguar main dealer full service history”, “Red Label Short Chassis Speed Model” and “University Speed Model total mechanical rebuild”.

There are three noun phrases that contain eight or more premodifiers. These are “very sound, solid & smart 'Big Boot, Big Bore' Dawn”, “rare and beautiful 'curlew' (picture dark root beer color) body” and “Triple Black' (with wonderful polished burl walnut facia and interior trim) one-owner local car”. Admittedly, analysing these three sequences as three very long premodifier sequences is not the only possibility. They are all complex constructions that contain, for example, submodification, which is why they could be analysed as several separate noun phrases as well. However, in the present study I decided to analyse even these sequences as one noun phrase. The long phrases seem to support the observations by Biber et al., who write that “[i]n principle, there is no limit to the complexity of noun phrases” (1999, 576). The writers also suggest (*ibid.*, 579) that premodifiers are used frequently in news because they save space. This is probably the reason why long premodifier sequences are used in these car advertisements as well, and even more often than in news, since the space reserved for one advertisement is limited.

### 6.1.2 Order of the Words Before the Head Noun

As mentioned above, for the purposes of this study it is not relevant to list all possible orders in which the words can occur in a premodifying sequence. This is why in this section only the most common tendencies and the most uncommon exceptions are discussed. In general, the word order in the premodifying sequences of the analysed advertisements closely follows rules of canonical word order. For example, Biber et al. (1999, 598–9) write that certain pairs of word classes often occur in the same order, so that when an adverb premodifies the head together with an adjective, in almost all cases, that is in over 95% of the cases, it is the adverb which precedes the adjective. This is not surprising since in such cases the adverb actually premodifies the adjective, and it is indeed hard to find any examples where the adjective would come before the adverb. By contrast, it is easy to find examples of adverbs preceding adjectives also in the analysed car advertisements: “absolutely superb condition”, “very competitive price” and “completely new interior”.

Another common pattern is that of an adjective followed by a noun premodifying the head noun. According to Biber et al. (1999, 599), this happens in 85% of the cases where the premodifier sequence contains both an adjective and a noun. This seems to be common in the analysed advertisements as well, as can be seen from the following examples: “perfect panel fit”, “full service history”, “new leather trim” and “white wall tyres”. Although the pattern “adverb + adjective + noun + head noun” is not listed in Biber et al. (ibid.), it seems to be fairly common in the advertisements for second-hand cars. Examples of this are “particularly low mileage example”, “very nice history file” and “exceptionally fine inlay work”. In their work Biber et al. (ibid., p. 598) present the preferred order for premodifiers, which is typically used: adverb + adjective + color adjective + participle + noun + head noun. It was impossible to find an example that would fit the model perfectly, but there is at least one case that comes very close, namely “very unusual polished aluminium facia”. Although there are not that many exact correspondences between the model by Biber et al. and the analysed advertisements, even the longer premodifying sequences still roughly

follow the model. This can be seen from examples like “very rare Super 90 Drauz roadster model”, “well documented service and ownership history” and “extremely rare (Touring Veloce) Roadster”.

It is possible to find only a few exceptions to the usual order of premodifiers in the analysed noun phrases. For example, there are some colour expressions that seem to violate the typical “adjective + noun + head noun” order. “Nimbus grey hide”, “Formula Red Pearl [the name of a certain shade of paint]”, “surf blue hide interior” and “Primrose yellow inserts” are examples of this kind of usage. Here the order can be explained with the help of the fact that the premodifying noun actually modifies the adjective rather than the head noun. There are also a few trademarks or product names that, if analysed as individual words, violate the general word order rules. For instance, the premodification sequence in “rear Continental pack” could be analysed as “noun + adjective”, or as “common noun + proper noun”.

Other premodifier orderings that seem uncommon tend to occur in relation to participles. It is quite easy to find examples where participles precede adjectives, such as “stunning original colours” and “contrasting black hide interior”. However, this is not very remarkable, because Biber et al. (1999, 599) write that it is still quite acceptable for participles to occur before the adjective. This is because, as the writers state, the more noun-like premodifier tends to occur closer to the head noun. This, together with the fact that “-ing participles can range from being more adjective-like to more noun-like” (ibid.), results in different positions of the participles in the premodifier sequence. For example, the adjective precedes the participle in only 65% of all cases studied (ibid.), whereas the corresponding number for “adjective + noun” is 85%. This is why the construction “participle + adjective” is not in fact very remarkable. Naturally, there are other kinds of uncommon word orders within the premodifier sequence as well, but they can most often be explained with the help of submodification, as in “Jaguar main dealer full service history” or “Red Label Short Chassis Speed Model”.

### 6.1.3 Coordination in the Premodifying Sequence

When studying the coordination found in the analysed car advertisements it is important to remember that the sum of the different possibilities could exceed one hundred percent, because it is possible for one premodifying sequence to contain a conjunction and commas, for example. There are two sequences that use more than one of the four options presented in Table 2 below, which is why the total sum of the four possibilities is 100,1 percent.

	number of instances	percentage of all instances
no coordination	1231	94,4%
conjunctions	30	2,3%
commas	11	0,8%
special character	34	2,6%
total	1306	100,1%

*Table 2: Types of coordination in the premodifying sequence.*

As can be seen from Table 2, the vast majority, that is 94,4%, of the analysed premodifier sequences do not use any coordination at all. This can partly be explained with the help of the results of the first research question: a great percentage of all premodifier sequences are either one-word or two-word constructions, so there is no need for conjunctions or commas. But in sequences that contain five or more words, it is still quite common not to use coordination. Approximately half of such sequences are not coordinated, as can be seen from the following examples: “superbly presented full FIA spec Lotus Cortina”, “multi U. S. Porsche club national concours winner”, “very successful SCCA vintage competition car” and “home market RHD original blue car”. Rush (1998, 169) calls these kinds of long non-coordinated sequences of premodifiers “unusual premodifiers” and states that they are frequently used in advertisements, because they can be interpreted as a single quality. Dyer (2008, 308–9) elaborates the point when she writes that unconventional combinations in the premodifier sequence are used for being as unique as possible: they “seem to suggest that the product has a special feature it alone possesses”.

The three possibilities of coordination are not used frequently in the analysed second-hand

car advertisements. Conjunctions are used in 2,3% of all premodifier sequences. The most common conjunction is *and*, as in “well documented service and ownership history”, “practical and elegant 4 seater convertible”, “handsome and rare car” or “leather and alcantara trim”. This is not unusual, since Biber et al. (1999, 601) note that *and* is the most common coordinator in premodifier sequences. In fact, there is only one instance where some other coordinator is used, namely *but* in “older but total restoration”. According to Bache (1978; 32,35) and Feist (2009, 305), premodifiers cannot be coordinated across different zones. This rule seems to be followed quite closely in the analysed advertisements, since I only managed to find a few examples where premodifiers in different zones are coordinated, such as “powerful and refined engine” and “convertible and hard tops”.

The next possible coordinating device, commas, are used in only 0,8% of the analysed advertisements. Most of the cases where commas are used seem to be what Bache calls “broken + unbroken” constructions (see Section 3.3). This can be seen in the following examples: “beautiful, time-warp 'Delphingrau' paint”, “wonderful, minimalist English special” and “superb, very well sorted example”. There are two instances where commas are used together with a conjunction, or a punctuation symbol that is used to represent a conjunction, which is normal when three or more items are listed. It is worth noting that both sequences are quite complex and would be difficult to interpret without coordination: “very sound, solid & smart 'Big Boot, Big Bore' Dawn” and “unique, very usable and extremely elegant collector's car”.

Most of the commas are used add items to a list, but there is at least one example where the comma actually expresses contrast. In the phrase “older, total restoration” the comma could probably be replaced by the word *but*, so that the meaning of the phrase would become something like “the restoration may be old, but it is total”. It is worth noting that some of the sequences containing a comma could be potentially ambiguous. For example, the phrase “perfect, fully restored condition” could mean that the condition of the car is perfect because it is fully restored

(*perfect* modifies *condition*), or that the car is perfect in every way, partly because it is fully restored (only *fully restored* modifies *condition*).

As can be seen from Table 2, in 2,6% of all analysed sequences some other punctuation symbol than a comma has been used to coordinate premodifiers. Most often an ampersand has been used instead of the word *and*, probably to save space, as in the following examples: “complete nut & bolt restoration”, “devastatingly fast & unique Porsche” and “superb & correct example”. There is one instance where the copywriter has chosen to use a plus sign to coordinate two items: “complete nut + bolt restoration”. A slash can be used instead of *or*, as in “complete documentation/ownership history”, but more often it seems to be used to replace *and*, as in “hard/soft tops”, which is a condensed way of telling the readers that the car comes with both the soft top and the hard top. Sometimes the use of a slash can be ambiguous. For instance, if a copywriter writes that the interior of the car is “grey/green leather”, does it mean that it contains both grey and green leather, or is the colour something in between so that the copywriter could not decide which word to use? In his study, Bruthiaux (1996, 88) writes that coordination is rarely used in advertisements for second-hand cars, and that it is often used in predictable pairs, as in “black & white”. Coordination is quite rare also in my material, but others than just predictable pairs can be coordinated, too, at least with an ampersand. The usage of a slash seems to be closer to the observations by Bruthiaux, since mostly different materials and colours are coordinated with a slash in the analysed advertisements.

#### 6.1.4 Different Semantic Groups Based on Function

It is not always easy to distinguish the different semantic groups from each other because there are some words that do not fall neatly into any one of the categories. For example, it was difficult for me to categorise the words *original* and *full*. In this thesis they are categorised as descriptors, because in the advertisements both words are sometimes intensified or graded, which I consider to

be one of the most important factors when distinguishing between classifiers and descriptors. This means that most descriptors are adjectives, adverbs or participles. Colour terms such as *magnolia* and *cream* are the only nouns that are analysed as descriptors, because, for instance, Biber et al. (1999, 508) and Feist (2009) state that colour terms are descriptors. This categorisation can also be justified by the fact that colour terms are gradable in some contexts, as in the proverb “The grass is (always) greener on the other side of the fence”. It is worth noting that one word in its different meanings can belong to several zones, as Feist (*ibid.*, p. 306) notes. For example, in “shift light system” the word *light* is not an adjective categorised as a descriptor, but a noun categorised as a classifier, which refers to the headlights of the car. Similarly, in “very sound condition” the word *sound* is not a noun but an adjective, which moves it from a classifier zone to descriptors. The percentages of the words categorised in different semantic groups can be seen from Table 3 below.

	number of words	percentage of all words
classifiers	1304	57,7%
descriptors	894	39,6%
reinforcers	61	2,7%
total	2259	100,0%

*Table 3: Words in different semantic groups based on function.*

As many as 57,7% of all analysed premodifiers are classifiers. The percentage is quite high, but, on the other hand, it seems to confirm the observations by Rush (1998, 161) and Leech (1966, 128), who write that, especially in specialised magazines, technical information is typically given quite frequently. Classifiers often express some kind of technical information, as shown by the following examples: “disc brakes”, “reversing camera”, “wing flares”, “tilt wheel” and “fuel injection”. Classifiers are also often used with materials or trademarks, as in “walnut dash”, “chrome wires” or “tinted glass” and “Campagnolo wheels”, “Pioneer stereo” or “Jag [Jaguar] engine”, respectively. Bex (1993, 725) writes that when targeting advertisements to a specific audience, typical abbreviations of that semantic field are used in order to attract and please that target audience. Abbreviations, such as the ones in “FWB engine”, “FIA papers”, “NCRS topflight”

and “bbs alloys”, are used quite frequently in the analysed second-hand car advertisements. I do not recognise every abbreviation in my material, which is why I decided to analyse all the abbreviations as one word and categorise them as classifiers, as they certainly cannot be graded or intensified. As Leech (1966, 128) writes, this kind of specialised terminology requires an interested audience who have the time to study the advertisement in detail.

As Table 3 shows, 39,6% of the analysed premodifiers are descriptors. Many of them are colours, as in “beige hide”, “red piping” and “black body”. According to Rush (1998, 161–2), descriptive premodifiers are often used to “create a special mood” and do not really give any information about the product in question. It is very easy to find examples of this in the car advertisements. These include “magnificent condition”, “excellent history”, “lovely interior”, “stunning car”, “cherished number” and “pristine condition”. However, there are some words that definitely are descriptors although they actually give some kind of information about the car, as “original engine”, which tells readers that the engine has not been changed whereas the tires in “new tires” have.

As mentioned above, comparatives and superlatives are frequently used in advertising language. Examples of comparatives in the analysed car advertisements are “more powerful and refined engine” and “older, total restoration”. According to Biber et al. (1999, 523–4), inflected comparatives are used approximately twice as often as inflected superlatives in the studied four registers. This does not seem to apply to the analysed second-hand car advertisements, because superlatives are clearly used more frequently than comparatives. Examples of the superlatives used in the analysed material are “highest standards”, “the best 100% original example”, “the finest example” and “very best examples”. Even if superlatives are more common than comparatives, they are not used nearly as often as the positive forms of the adjectives.

Sometimes it is difficult to decide if a word should be categorised as a descriptor or a reinforcer. In such cases the distinction is based on the fact that reinforcers are mutually

synonymous and have no antonyms (Feist 2009, 330). Thus, in “complete service history booklet” the word *complete* is a descriptor, because it would be possible to say *incomplete service history booklet*, whereas the word *absolute* in “absolute bargain” could possibly be replaced with *complete*, but since negation would result in the semantically peculiar *\*inabsolute bargain*, the word *absolute* is categorised as a reinforcer.

Perhaps a little surprisingly, only 2,7% of all analysed premodifiers are reinforcers. Most of them are adverbs, as in expressions like “really special RHD manual Pagoda”, “very unusual find”, “extremely comprehensive restoration” and “absolutely stunning condition”. It is possible to find other types of reinforcers than just adverbs. These are present in, for example, “absolute bargain”, “total spec car” and “absolute beauty”. I would have expected adverbs to be more common, but perhaps they are not used to any significant extent because the space is limited and there simply is not enough space for words that have no referential or descriptive meaning.

### 6.1.5 Combinations of Different Semantic Groups

In this section I will study how commonly words from different semantic groups are combined in one premodifier sequence. In the previous section I categorised premodifiers into three groups: classifiers, descriptors and reinforcers. However, not all words can be categorised into these groups. For example, numbers, conjunctions and prepositions belong to none of them. When analysing, for instance, premodifier sequences that only contain classifiers, I have ignored the uncategorised words if they occur in the middle of the premodifier sequence. This means that phrases like “permanent 4 wheel drive”, “leather and alcantara trim” and “chassis up restoration” that do not contain any descriptors or reinforcers are analysed as only containing classifiers, despite the fact that not all words within the sequence actually are classifiers. The results of this categorisation can be seen from Table 4 below.

	number of sequences	percentage of all sequences
only classifiers	537	41,2%
only descriptors	390	29,9%
only reinforcers	4	0,3%
combinations	373	28,6%
total	1304	100,0%

*Table 4: Different semantic groups in the premodifying sequences.*

As can be seen from the table, 41,2% of all analysed premodifier sequences only use classifiers, which means that premodifier sequences consisting of classifiers form the largest group. This is not surprising, since the results presented in 6.1.4 show that when studying the individual words, the majority, that is, 57,7% of all analysed words are classifiers. Some of these are proper nouns, such as car models or other car related names, as in “Rolls Royce nationals”, “Aston Martin main dealer” and “Team Elite colours”. It is interesting that the names of some apparently well-known persons are also used in the same way, such as “Peter May engine”, “Jack Knight gears” or “Nick Stagg engine”.

As was already mentioned in the previous section, classifiers often express technical information. This becomes even more evident when the premodifier consists of several classifiers, as the following examples illustrate: “side exit exhaust”, “factory stainless steel dash”, “honeycomb aluminium chassis” and “twin turbo charged 2.85 litre flat-six engine”. As mentioned before, car advertisements often contain both reason and tickle (see Section 2.5). Cook (1992, 103) elaborates this by writing that in car advertisements reason arguments can become ticklers. According to him, this means that the given technical information may sometimes be so complex that even the target audience does not understand it. In such cases the advertisement does not appeal to reason but feelings. There are a great number of premodified noun phrases that I do not understand, such as “XJ VSE engine”, “stage triple webbers”, “f/adjustable suspension”, “twin covered sidemounts” and “Moroso-baffled sump”. As a non-expert it is impossible for me to determine whether an average member of the target audience would understand all those phrases or not, although it is worth noting

that, for example, the commonest search engines do not provide easy and straightforward definitions for these phrases. As Bax (2011, 51) writes, it is typical for different subgenres to use special jargon when “referring to common and familiar actions and objects”. The very specific technical terms are probably used here because the copywriters believe that the potential customer understands them. They also make the copywriters sound like experts. It may also be flattering for the customers to know these special terms and then feel that the advertisement using the term is addressed directly at them.

Perhaps a little surprisingly, there are no more than 29,9% premodifier sequences that only contain descriptors. In many of these instances the only function of the descriptive sequence is to create a mood, which is exactly why they are often used, as Rush (*ibid.*) states. Examples of this are “handsome and rare car”, “lovely original interior”, “meticulous and painstaking restoration”, “superb and correct example” and “interesting comprehensive history”. There are also numerous descriptor sequences that belong to either of two types of colour expressions. Firstly, there are expressions that describe the colour in more detail by using words for hue, saturation and brightness, as in “navy blue interior”, “pale blue interior”, “light tan interior” or “dark green hide”. Secondly, there are expressions where an ordinary adjective has been combined with a colour term resulting in phrases like “perfect beige cloth”, “gleaming Azure blue coachwork” and “beautiful parchment leather”. In these expressions an ordinary adjective has been used together with a colour term to “create a special mood”, as Rush (1998, 161–2) writes, since the adjectives do not actually add any information about the colour, unlike in the first group of colour terms.

As can be seen from Table 4, premodifier sequences consisting solely of reinforcers are very rare as only 0,3% of all analysed sequences contain nothing but reinforcers. This is not very remarkable, because the majority of all reinforcers are adverbs which cannot function alone as a premodifier. However, there are a few cases where the reinforcer is not an adverb and can thus alone premodify the head noun. Many of these use the word *absolute*, as in “absolute beauty” and

“absolute jewel”.

Perhaps the most interesting cases are those premodifier sequences that combine words from several semantic groups. As Table 4 shows, not more than 28,6% of all premodifier sequences combine different groups, which I find to be quite a small figure. Rush (1998, 163) writes that the most common combination of semantic groups is to first have one or more descriptors and then one or more classifiers. There are numerous examples of this: “fabulous local car”, “sumptuous Wildberry Connolly hides”, “beautiful walnut cabin trim”, “perfect panel fit”, “amazing show condition”, “delightful period accessories” and “excellent restored condition”. As Leech (1966, 130) notes, combinations like this mix “praise and practicality”. Cook (1992, 103) notes that especially car advertisements often contain both reason and tickle arguments. Conley (2009, 38) explains that this is because car advertisements often aim to highlight the magical and the technical aspects of the car at the same time, and thus frequently contain both emotion and facts.

It is also possible to find premodifier sequences which combine all three semantic classes. These include, for instance, “very nice history file”, “very rare Super 90 Drauz roadster model”, “extremely brisk continental touring” and “very classic and elegant Rolls Royce”. Reinforcers are sometimes combined with descriptors, as in “very competitive price” or “highly accurate replica”, but other combinations or orders are quite rare. There are some instances where a classifier comes before a descriptor: “Bloomington Gold Certified car”, “matching blue interior”, “removable hard top” and “multiple Platinum winner”. It is worth noting that many of these examples contain a colour term. There are also a great number of other sequences that describe the colour of some part of the car and that consist of two words belonging to different semantic groups, such as “tan Everflex top”, “blue top roll” and “beige hide interior”.

#### 6.1.6 Commonest Words in the Semantic Groups

In this section I will study which words are used most frequently in each semantic group. As Leech

(1966, 57) writes, there are adjectives that are especially common in advertising language, and in addition to that, every product group has its typical adjectives. Bruthiaux (1996, 35) calls this phenomenon *expected lexical choices*: it is quite self-evident that a car advertisement will contain words like *tires*, whereas job advertisements talk about *salaries*. In his study, Bruthiaux (*ibid.*, p. 119) writes about the “recycling of conventionalized coordinated segments”. By this he means that some phrases are recurrent, such as “looks & runs great” and its alternations (*ibid.*). It is possible to find such conventionalised expressions in my material as well. My first intention was to list the twenty most frequent words in each group, but for the sake of practicality only the list of common descriptors contains twenty words. It is worth noting that all of the possible variation forms are listed under the base word, so that, for example, words like *beautiful* or *good* include *beautifully* or *better*, *the best* and *well*.

The commonest classifiers and the number of their occurrences are presented in Table 5 below. The commonest words are *service* and *factory*, which, together with *history*, express the condition and the equipment of the car, as in the following examples: “service records”, “factory warranty”, “factory air conditioning”, “factory welds” and “comprehensive history file”. Especially common seems to be the phrase “full service history”, which is repeated so often that it can be called conventionalised. Almost as frequent as *factory* is the word *leather*, which most often describes the interior of the car, as in “black leather interior” or “new leather trim”. There are also other common classifiers that are used to describe the material used in the car. These are *hide* in “red hide interior” or “extended hide trim” and *walnut* in “walnut dash” or “walnut veneers”.

1. service	29	engine	12
2. factory	21	nut	12
3. leather	20	13. history	11
matching	20	luxury	11
5. hide	18	15. power	10
UK	18	sport(s)	10
7. RHD	16	17. convertible	9
8. concours	15	speed	9
9. litre/liter	13	walnut	9
10. bolt	12	20. several words	8

Table 5: Commonest classifiers in the analysed second-hand car advertisements.

As could be expected, the table contains several car-related words, such as *engine* in “engine improvements” or “engine bay”. Other words related to the word *engine* are *litre* or *liter*, *speed* and *power*. They appear in phrases like “famous 6 cylinder 2 liter AC engine”, “Red Label Short Chassis Speed Model”, “4 speed gearbox” [numeral included here for the sake of clarity], “power convertible top” and “power steering”. Phrases that seem to have reached a conventionalised status in the analysed second-hand car advertisements are “matching numbers” (meaning that the major components of the car are original), “concours condition”, “total nut & bolt restoration” and “original UK RHD example”, which stands for right-hand drive and means that the car is built for the United Kingdom and it has the steering wheel on the right. The remaining three words are used in phrases like “luxury leather”, “sports exhaust” and “convertible top”. I only included the 19 commonest words, because there are numerous words that appear eight times. These include, for example, *chrome* in “chrome wheels”, *period* in “period luggage rack”, *aluminium* in “aluminium dash” and *owner* in “fabulous condition 3 owner Chimaera”.

As can be seen from Table 6 below, the commonest descriptor is *original*, which is used 82 times, as in the phrases “original mirrors”, “original width whitewall tyres”, “original manuals” and “original window sticker”. It is quite a predictable word when keeping in mind that the material consists of two car magazines that mainly discuss classic cars. The potential buyer most likely wants to know that the car is as authentic as possible. At first it may seem rather peculiar that almost

the opposites of *original*, namely *new* and *recent*, are also included on the list, *new* even in fifth place. However, this is quite reasonable, since many cars are bought for racing or normal driving, which is why they should be drivable. The potential buyer is probably happy to know that the car has “new clutch”, “new tires”, “recent new cylinder head” or “recent major service”. The second most frequently used descriptor is the word *full*, which appears in some conventionalised phrases such as “full service history” and “full history known” [the word *known* included here for the sake of clarity]. Two other popular descriptors that are used to express extensiveness are *total* and *comprehensive*, which are used in a way similar to *full*, as in “total reconstruction” or conventionalised “total nut & bolt restoration” and “comprehensive history file”.

1. original	82	11. excellent	16
2. full	61	grey	16
3. black	53	perfect	16
4. red	37	14. rare	15
5. new	30	stunning	15
6. good	29	16. comprehensive	14
7. superb	24	17. fabulous	13
total	24	recent	13
9. beautiful	23	tan	13
10. blue	17	20. silver	12

*Table 6: Commonest descriptors in the analysed second-hand car advertisements.*

The largest semantic group of popular descriptors consist of words that express positiveness or the exceptionally good features of the car. These are used in phrases like “the best Ferrari”, “very good order”, “superb example”, “beautiful condition”, “excellent example”, “perfect condition”, “rare factory hard top”, “stunning original colours” and “fabulous condition”. There are also many colour terms that are used so often that they are on the list. These are *black*, *red*, *blue*, *grey*, *tan* and *silver*, which often describe the colour of the car or its interior. Colour terms will be discussed in detail in the following sections. If colours are excluded, the words *low* (used 11 times), *complete* (9), *exceptional* (9), *high* (9), *lovely* (9) and *dark* (8) would be on the list. These words mostly express extensiveness or positiveness, as the examples presented above.

The phrase “exceptional condition” is worth mentioning because it is used so many times that it actually does not feel very exceptional any more and can be called a cliché. Jackson (1988, 104) defines clichés as collocations which are so fixed that they have lost their meaning. As an example he presents *desirable residences*:

The lexeme *residence*, in itself a high style synonym for *house*, seems to be always accompanied by *desirable* in a fixed expression, and we read it no longer as having the meaning 'desirable' + 'residence', but merely as a paraphrase for *house*: it has become a cliché of estate agents' jargon”.

When comparing the list of frequently used descriptors to the list of classifiers, it can be seen that certain descriptors are in general used more often than classifiers, since on the classifier list only the first four words are used at least twenty times, whereas on the descriptor list the corresponding number is nine. This is why some words that are meant to be unique might lose part of their power, at least if one reads a great number of car advertisements.

As can be seen from Table 7 below, of the reinforcers only seven were used more than once. Quite predictably, the most common of them is the word *very*, which can be found in phrases like “very unusual find”, “very special turbo” and “very fine condition”. Since the meaning of many other adverbs is rather similar to *very*, it is easy to find similar kinds of examples with other adverbs, like “extremely brisk continental touring”, “truly fine original example”, “absolutely stunning condition”, “particularly low mileage example” and “highly accurate replica”. The only reinforcer that is not an adverb on the list is the word *absolute*, which is used in constructions like “absolute bargain”, “absolute jewel” and “absolute beauty”.

1. very	35	absolutely	3
2. extremely	4	6. highly	2
truly	4	particularly	2
4. absolute	3	8. several words	1

*Table 7: Commonest reinforcers in the analysed second-hand car advertisements.*

As expected, the lists contain many car-related words, especially those on the classifier list. Previous studies of advertising language discuss the most common adjectives of advertising, which

is why it is possible to compare my results to adjectives that are generally used in advertisements.

Writers like Dyer (2008, 308), Goddard (1998, 105) and Leech (1966, 52), list frequently used adjectives in advertisements. Dyer's list includes adjectives like *good, free, fresh, delicious, full,*

*clean, fine, great* and *new*, which is perhaps used most frequently. Goddard lists typical

comparatives and superlatives, as, for instance, *newer, better, healthier, nicer, the best, tastiest* and *easier*. Leech lists typical adjectives used in commentary and dialogue part of advertising.

Adjectives occurring in both lists are *new, good/better/best*, and *sure*. In addition to that, Leech

(ibid., p. 152) presents twenty commonest adjectives used in advertisements for television. This list also includes adjectives like *free, fresh, delicious, full, clean* and *wonderful*.

It is worth noting that all three writers mention the words *good/better/best* and *new*, which are common in the analysed second-hand car advertisements as well. Dyer (2008, 308) and Leech (1966, 152) both also mention the word *full*, which is in second place on my list. As Leech (ibid., p. 52) writes, it is worth noting that *good* is one of most common adjectives in English, which is why it is not surprising to find it in advertising language as well. It is also worth noting that none of these writers list colour terms, which suggests that they are used in the analysed second-hand car advertisements more frequently than in other types of advertisements.

#### 6.1.7 Number of Words in the Colour Expressions

As Table 8 below shows, the clear majority, that is 58,6% of all colour terms, consist of one word.

This is a considerable percentage, but it is still less than, for example, in the study by Frank (1990), where about 72% of all colour terms used in the mail-order clothing catalogues examined are one-word terms. In this study, two-word colour terms are used in 34,1% of all cases, and 7,3% of all colour terms consist of three or more words.

	all colour terms		premodifying terms		non-premodifying terms	
	number of terms	percentage of all terms	number of terms	percentage of A/B/C	number of terms	percentage of A/B/C
one word	225	58,6% (A)	159	70,7%	66	29,3%
two words	131	34,1% (B)	29	22,1%	102	77,9%
three or more words	28	7,3% (C)	6	21,4%	22	78,6%

*Table 8: Number of words in the colour expressions.*

When studying one-word colour terms in more detail, it can be seen that 70,7% of them are used as premodifiers. Very often they describe the interior of the car or the leather used in it, as the following examples demonstrate: “red interior”, “black interior”, “biscuit leather” and “tan leather”. Some other features of the interior can also be described with a one-word premodifying colour term, as in “white coves [sic]”, “grey stitching” or “red carpets”. Only once is the colour of the car described directly by using a premodifying colour term: “blue car”. However, there are two expressions that describe the colour of the car but do that without mentioning the word *car*. These are “black body” and “white exterior”. There are some cases where the colour of the car is described by using a one-word colour term that does not premodify any other element, but even these are often followed by premodifying colour expressions as in “Ivory with Black leather”, “red with new black interior” and “silver with black roof”. All in all it seems that one-word premodifiers are not specific enough to define the colour of the car, which is why it is most often described by using longer expressions. The colour of some other parts of the car, on the other hand, is not so important and can thus be expressed by using a one-word premodifier.

While one-word colour terms are more likely to premodify the head word, only 22,1% of two-word colour expressions occur as premodifiers. This means that the majority, that is, 77,9% of two-word colour terms do not modify any head noun. The two-word colour expressions are most often used to describe the colour of the car, as in “Royal Garnet”, “Dark Oyster”, “Royal Ivory”, “Golden sand” or “frost beige”. The two-word expressions are probably used in order to attract attention by being as unique as possible. Since all analysed advertisements contain a picture of the car, it is usually not essential to say that the car is, for example, red, but the colour term is usually

somehow modified, as the following examples show: “tuxedo black”, “torch red”, “Ice Blue” and “Tudor grey”. The first mentioned colour term in the advertisement most often refers to the colour of the car and is frequently the most complex colour term in the given advertisement, which suggests that the colour of the car is far more important than the colour of the interior, for instance.

Some two-word colour expressions contain an ordinary modifier of saturation or brightness, like “dark blue”, “metallic blue” and “mid green”. Some of these also appear as premodifiers, as in “light beige leather” or “matt silver body”. There are also some patterns that are commonly used with the two-word colour expressions. Examples of these include “place + colour” and “nature term + colour”, as in “Portland Grey”, “Wimbledon White”, “Bristol Red” or “Sherwood Green” and “primrose yellow”, “peacock blue”, “orchard green” or “iris blue”, respectively. Some of the advertisements take advantage of the special knowledge of the readers by using colour terms that are based on some car model or make, such as “Miura Green”, “Ferrari red” or “Lotus Yellow”, which most likely have a specific meaning to the target audience.

Colour terms that contain three or more words are quite rare. As many as 78,6% of them do not premodify a head noun but appear independently, which is not surprising since more words are most often used to create even more complex and unique colour terms to attract the attention of the readers, as in “Deep Mulsanne Green”, “tawny bronze metallic” and “Highland Grey Pearl”. Some of these multi-word colour terms describe the interior or some other part of the car, and thus occur as premodifiers: “Light Saddle Cloth interior”, “Portland nimbus grey leather” and “ST James red interior”. Mostly these complex colour terms are nonetheless used independently. Sometimes two shorter colour terms are combined to form a longer expression, as in “smoke and sage green”, “carmine red / saratoga red” and “onyx black – silver”.

The more complex colour expressions also use terms that can be called *international racing colours*. In the early 1900s, race cars were often painted in national colours according to the manufacturer of the car (The Basement Geographer, 2012). These colours were standardised by

Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) but they are no longer officially used (ibid.). However, some car manufacturers still informally use these colours, so that there are colour expressions that are very well-known (Project Gutenberg Self-Publishing Press, 2013). These are *British Racing Green* (or *BRG* for short) for British cars, *Silver Arrow* for the German, *Bleu de France* for the French and *Rosso Corsa* [racing red] for Italian cars (ibid.). This is why many people still feel that, for instance, Ferraris should be red. The copywriters of the second-hand car advertisements I have analysed believe that the readers are familiar with these terms and thus target the advertisements for them by using this special terminology, or some elements of it, as can be seen from examples like “British Racing Green”, “Acurie Ecosse Blue [sic: *Ecurie Ecosse*, term for the Scottish racing team]”, “Rosso Alfa red wheels”, or “Aston Racing Green” and “Lotus Racing Green”, which basically mean the same as BRG since both Aston Martin and Lotus are British car manufacturers. These terms give more precise information to the customers as they most likely know exactly what shade of dark green British Racing Green actually is.

#### 6.1.8 Conventional and Unconventional Colour Expressions

As mentioned earlier, the colour terms in this section are divided into Basic Colour Terms (BCT) and Elaborate Colour Terms (ECT) based on the study by Steinvall (see Section 3.6). As Table 9 below shows, the majority of the analysed colour terms, that is 58,3%, are ECTs. This is very surprising, since, for example, in Steinvall's study BCTs were used in 92,2% of all cases, although it is worth noting that his material is gathered from the Bank of English corpus which mainly consists of other text types than advertisements (Steinvall 2002, 10).

	all colour terms		premodifying terms		non-premodifying terms	
	number of terms	percentage of all terms	number of terms	percentage of BCTs/ECTs	number of terms	percentage of BCTs/ECTs
BCTs	160	41,7%	113	70,6%	47	29,6%
ECTs	224	58,3%	81	36,2%	143	63,8%

*Table 9: Number of conventional and unconventional colour expressions.*

When studying BCTs in more detail, it can be seen that 70,6% of them premodify the head noun. This seems to be in conformity with the results presented in the previous section, since BCTs are very often one-word premodifiers that are used when describing the interior or some other part of the car, as in “black interior”, “silver wheels”, “grey carpets” and “red stitching”. There are a few cases where the colour of the car is described by using a simple BCT, but these are quite rare. BCTs mostly appear alone, but there are some instances of two BCTs used together. Examples of this are “silver blue body” and “black/grey leather”, which premodify the head, as well as “white grey” and “silver/red”, which do not. These last four examples could possibly be analysed as ECTs, but I think that the combination of two BCTs still is a BCT.

As can be seen from Table 9, 63,8% of all ECTs do not modify the head but stand independently, and their function often is to describe the colour of the car as uniquely and attractively as possible. Very frequently ECTs are formed by combining a modifier indicating shade and a BCT, which results in creative combinations like “Monaco Orange”, “sport red”, “fern green” and “velvet green”. There are other possible combinations as well. A BCT can come before the point of comparison, as in “silver sand”, “Black Garnet” and “silver stardust”, or the colour term does not contain any BCT at all, as in “frost beige”, “Royal Ivory”, “light tan interior” and “metallic bronze”. There are also some cases where the BCT part of the colour term occurs in the middle of the sequence, as happens in “pastel blue metallic”, “Highland Grey Pearl” and “Formula Red Pearl”. Sometimes a one-word ECT stands alone and premodifies the head, as the following examples illustrate: “parchment leather”, “Magnolia leather”, “biscuit leather”, “mushroom hide” and “oatmeal leather”. It is worth noting that the international racing colour terms presented above

are categorised as ECTs.

### 6.1.9 The Commonest Colour Expressions

It is possible to count the commonest colour terms in two ways. All colour terms can be counted independently, or then all variations of the same colour term can be counted together. For example, if the terms are counted in the first way, *ice blue*, *dark blue*, *pale blue* and *iris blue* are four separate words that all occur once. If they are listed by using the second option, all four terms can be seen as variants of the basic form *blue*, and thus counted as the same colour occurring four times. It is worth noting that these forms have to contain the word *blue* to belong to the same group. This means that, for example, the word *navy* is not analysed as *blue* in this study, even if it actually is a shade of blue. In this section I have listed the analysed colour terms in the first way, but I will also study if the second way would give different kinds of results.

Table 10 below shows the commonest colour terms that function as premodifiers. The results are not very astonishing, as I have already presented numerous examples that describe the interior or some other part of the car, such as “black interior”, “red stitching”, “grey stripes”, “blue top” and “tan leather”. Other premodifying colour terms are used in quite a similar way, as in “cream hide”, “silver roof” and “beige interior”. As was the case with common classifiers and reinforcers, in the last place on the list there are several words that appear equally often. In Table 10 these are *green*, *parchment* and *magnolia*, which are all used four times in very similar instances: “green interior”, “parchment hides” and “magnolia hide”.

1. black	47	6. cream	10
2. red	25	7. silver	8
3. grey	11	8. beige	7
blue	11	9. several colours	4
tan	11		

Table 10: Commonest colour terms functioning as premodifiers.

If all versions of the same colour are counted under the same base form, the results are almost identical. *Blue* with all its different forms such as “pale blue interior”, “surf blue hide” and “Azure blue coachwork” outnumbers *grey*. *Parchment* and *magnolia* do not fit on the list, as *white* enters it with five occurrences, such as “white coves [sic]” or “Gran [sic] Prix white body”. When analysing the colours in this way it can be seen that not all colours have much variation. For example, *black* is nearly always just *black*, while *blue* (as shown above), *grey* and especially *red* colour premodifiers have more variation, as can be seen from examples like “Portland nimbus grey” or just “nimbus grey” as well as “Rosso Alfa red wheels”, “Claret red leather” and “ST James red interior”, respectively.

When studying the non-premodifying colour expressions, an interesting observation can be made. There are 190 colour expressions that do not modify a head noun, and only 24 of them are used more than once. This means that when the colour terms do not modify a head noun, they tend to be more creative and short-lived than the premodifying colour terms. As Frank (1990, 116) writes, copywriters have to be imaginative and even invent new colour terms, in order not to bore their readers (ibid., p. 121). The most frequently used non-premodifying colour terms are listed in Table 11 below. When comparing Table 11 to Table 10, it can be seen that they contain many of the same terms, especially in the first five places. The most interesting term in Table 11 is the international racing colour term *Rosso Corsa*, which is used five times. It is also interesting to note that *dark green* is used more frequently than mere *green*. As mentioned above, the often-used used car colour *British Racing Green* is dark green, which may explain its commonness. Again, the last place on the list is occupied by several colour terms which are all used three times. These are *grey*, *ivory*, *sand* and, quite surprisingly, *Suffolk red*.

1. black	21	5. tan	5
2. silver	11	Rosso Corsa	5
red	11	7. dark green	4
4. blue	6	8. several colours	3

*Table 11: Commonest colour terms in non-premodifying position.*

If all modified forms are listed under the same word, the list does not undergo very dramatic changes, as was the case with premodifying colour terms. *Red* becomes the most frequently used colour term with 29 occurrences and both *green* and *white* enter the list with 21 and 9 occurrences, respectively. According to Frank (1990, 121), terms from the blue and green colour families tend to be modified more than other colours. In my analysis, *blue* is in third place with modifications like “Sierra blue”, “peacock blue”, “Pacific blue”, “Sapphire blue” and “Midnight blue” and *green* is in fourth place with several creative modifications, as the following examples demonstrate: “Deep Mulsanne Green”, “Woodcote Green”, “Almond Green” and “DBR1 racing green”. However, as already mentioned, *red* is even more often modified than *blue* or *green*, as can be seen from creative modifications such as “Ardent red”, “Regency Red”, “flamenco red”, “Signal Red” and “Rosso red”.

It is interesting to find creative colour terms like these, because, as Frank (1990, 121) suggests, advertisements targeted for men usually contain “simple, straightforward, conventional, real-world” colour terms, while Cook (1992, 103) writes that car advertisements are still most often targeted at men. So why are there so many car advertisements that contain complex and innovative colour terms? One of the reasons may be the fact that the quality of the pictures in a magazine is not perfect, as Frank (1990, 125) notes. Some colours may look exactly the same on the page, which is why they need to be described in more detail so that the potential buyer would know what the colour of the car actually looks like. More likely the reason is not that practical.

As Goddard (1998, 106) notes, vocabulary in advertisements is “carefully chosen to promote positive associations in the minds of the target audience”. This applies to colour expressions as well.

For example, how exactly is *diamond black* different from ordinary black? How does *Silver Stardust* differ from grey? And what is the difference between *Royal Ivory* and *ivory*, other than the fact that the former sounds far more exciting and desirable? Copywriters know this and use these kinds of expressions to catch the attention of the potential customer and to create a memorable advertisement. As Frank (1990, 121) states, copywriters have to try their best to make their colour terms as different and fresh as possible. This also resembles Rein's observation (1982, 51) that copywriters have to “create the difference”, that is, tell how the product in question is somehow special, even if it really is not. This is evident when studying colours that are very close to each other. For example, both *orchard green* and *velvet green* look just dark green to me, and it is difficult to see what could possibly be the real difference between colour pairs like *Ferrari red* and *Fiesta red* or *Prussian blue* and *pearl blue*, other than the connotations they evoke.

## 6.2 Advertisements for New Cars

In the following two sections I will study a sample of advertisements for new cars to see if their premodification tendencies differ from typical use of premodifiers in second-hand car advertisements. Originally the plan was to treat both advertisement types equally, that is, answer the same research questions and present the results in tables. However, when analysing the advertisements in order to answer the first six research questions, I noticed that these advertisements do not contain any colour terms at all, which is why I decided to exclude research questions 7–9 when analysing advertisements for new cars. In addition to that, the differences between the two advertisement types were not as significant as one might think. These two advertisement types actually use different kinds of linguistic strategies, but the differences are found when studying, for example, the use of pronouns, questions and commands, rather than the use of premodifiers. This is why the following sections will quite briefly discuss and present only the most significant differences when comparing advertisements for new cars to second-hand car

advertisements.

### 6.2.1 Syntactic Features

The premodifying noun phrases are generally a little shorter in advertisements for new cars than in second-hand car advertisements. One-word premodifiers are slightly more common in advertisements for new cars (54,7% versus 51,2%) but second-hand car advertisements have more two-word, three-word and four-word premodifiers, and premodifiers containing more than four words are quite rare in advertisements for new cars. The longest premodifier sequences in advertisements for new cars are two sequences that contain six words. These are “available 11-speaker Bose premium surround sound system” and “A8, A7, A6, Q7 and Q7 models”. The former is a unique combination of premodifiers since there is no coordination, whereas the latter is actually an example of Bache's distributive construction (see Section 3.3). This means that modifiers do not modify one head word but separate entities, as in Bache's *West European and Japanese leaders*, where there are two types of leaders. All in all, while premodifier sequences in advertisements for new cars are longer than is often the case in English, they are shorter than in second-hand car advertisements. The language of second-hand car advertisements resembles newspaper English, because in newspapers brevity is often considered more important than explicitness (Biber et al. 1999, 589).

The order of words in the premodifying sequence is most often very conventional in the advertisements for the new cars I have analysed, as was the case with second-hand car advertisements as well. Actually, the order of premodifiers is even more conventional in advertisements for new cars. This is because most of the premodifier sequences that may first seem uncommon are sequences that contain participles, as in “torque vectoring All-wheel drive”, “Lane Departure Warning System” or “sophisticated new design”, which again resembles the results presented in 6.1.2. On the other hand, advertisements for new cars seem to contain a smaller

number of adverbs than second-hand car advertisements, and very often they seem to occur in quite long sequences, as in “highly personalized driving experience” or “newly refined 328-hp VQ engine”. Naturally, there are also many instances of an uncomplicated “adverb + adjective” construction, such as “technologically advanced car” and “Very Important Pilot”, which again confirms the conventionality of word order in the analysed advertisements for new cars.

When comparing the coordination found in advertisements for new cars to second-hand car advertisements, it is possible to find some differences, although the percentage of sequences that do not use any coordination is very high in both advertisements types (94,6% and 94,4%, respectively). Because several sequences in the former contain both commas and a conjunction, as in “fastest, meanest and most powerful model”, “powerful, luxurious and advanced Acura” and “powertrain, cabin and technology settings”, the sum of the different coordination options is 101,4 percent.

Commas are used frequently, which seems to be the greatest difference between the two advertisement types. When commas are used, the sequence becomes a list of coordinated items rather than a unique combination of premodifiers, which is why it is a little surprising that commas are used so often in advertisements for new cars. It is also impossible to find any other punctuation symbols, such as an ampersand, a slash or a plus sign, that would have been used for coordination, unlike in the analysed second-hand car advertisements. All things considered, it seems that in second-hand car advertisements it is very important to use as little space as possible (for example, by using unusual punctuation symbols for coordination) whereas the language in the advertisements for new cars follows grammatical norms more closely, for example, by using commas and the conjunction *and* when listing several items.

### 6.2.2 Semantic Features

It is possible to find more differences when comparing the semantic features of second-hand car advertisements and advertisements for new cars. The latter have clearly more classifiers (53,7%

versus 67,3%) and, as a result of that, the other semantic groups are not so common. The massive use of classifiers leads to very technical expressions, as the following examples illustrate:

“passenger-side mirror”, “rearview camera”, “Pedestrian Recognition”, “steering assist”, “torque response” and “climate control”. As was the case with second-hand car advertisements, it is easy to find examples of classifiers that are abbreviations, as in “U. S. model”, “LED taillights”, “SMS texting” and “USB integration”.

As already mentioned, descriptors are a little less common (32,1% versus 39,6%) in the advertisements for new cars than in the second-hand car advertisements. One of the greatest differences between the two advertisement types is the fact that the former do not contain any colour terms. As was the case with second-hand car advertisements, the analysed descriptors can give some information about the car, as in “sleeker lines”, “spacious interior” or “lighter version”, but most often they are used solely to create a mood, as in “innovative Altima”, “superior handling”, “glorious bloodline” and “aggressive design”. Comparatives are used sparingly, but superlatives are used perhaps even more frequently than in the second-hand car advertisements, as the following examples illustrate: “the best Civic”, “sharpest instrument”, “highest quality”, “best Gran Turismo racers” and “fastest, meanest and most powerful model”. For some reason, reinforcers are extremely rare in these advertisements. It is also worth noting that they are all used as adverbs, so that it is impossible to find reinforcers in constructions like “absolute jewel”, which are sometimes used in the analysed second-hand car advertisements.

As classifiers are used very frequently in the analysed advertisements for new cars, it could have been predicted that premodifier sequences containing only classifiers are the most commonly used group by 53,3% (the corresponding number for second-hand cars being 41,2%). Premodifier sequences that only contain classifiers are very technical, as the following examples demonstrate: “carbon nano-hybrid composite”, “driver assist systems”, “race-bred 400hp, 3,8 liter engine” and “backup camera functionality”. Many of the analysed classifier sequences are names for the

available accessories or other inventions of the car companies, such as “Porsche Fraction management”, “LaneWatch Blind Spot Display”, “Pandora radio compatibility”, “Cross Traffic Assist” and “Moving Object Detection”. Classifiers like this are not really used in the second-hand car advertisements.

Although the number of sequences containing only descriptors in the second-hand car advertisements is not dramatically higher than the corresponding number in the advertisements for new cars (29,9% versus 25,9%), there are nevertheless some differences between these two types, the greatest of them being the fact that in the latter, the descriptor sequences are very short. In fact, there are only nine expressions that consist of more than one descriptor. Some of these are “bold athletic stance”, “clean, lean shape” and “aggressive sharp lines”, but otherwise descriptors either appear together with classifiers or then there is only one descriptor before the head noun, as in “expensive vehicle”, “smart technology” and “perfect fit”. There are no instances of sequences containing nothing but reinforcers, but this is to be expected since all reinforcers in the analysed advertisements for new cars are adverbs.

As was the case with second-hand car advertisements, sequences that contain different semantic groups are surprisingly rare, as only 20,8% of all premodifier sequences in the advertisements for new cars combine several groups (the corresponding number for second-hand cars being 28,6%). The results here resemble those presented in 6.1.5 in the sense that the most typical combination seems to be one or more descriptors followed by one or more classifiers, as in “distinctive exterior styling”, “mean aerodynamic body styling”, “new mid-engine Cayman” or “true sports car experience”. There are some exceptions as well, as in “refined and capable Land Rover”, which contains coordination and “exclusive Infiniti Direct Response Hybrid System”, which is a product name, but all in all, premodifier sequences combining several semantic groups are quite conventional, which seems to be the greatest difference when comparing the advertisements for new cars to those for second-hand cars. The possible reason could be that

copywriters of second-hand car advertisements have to rely on innovative language and unique descriptions when selling their products, whereas copywriters for new cars typically can use other devices as well, such as large pictures, which are not analysed in the present study.

Because only 62 advertisements for new cars were analysed, there are not that many words that would occur a great number of times. This is why only the nine most frequently used classifiers and descriptors are presented here, and since there are only four reinforcers, it is not essential to present them in a table. The reinforcers in the advertisements for new cars are *highly*, which is used twice, in “highly efficient MKZ Hybrid” and “highly personalized driving experience”, *ultra*, used in “ultra high performers” and *very* in “Very Important Pilot”.

The commonest classifiers are presented in Table 12 below. It is interesting to note that many of them are names of car makes, which are used in constructions like “all-new BMW 4 Series”, “Infiniti InTouch” and “all-new Chevrolet Impala”. Only one of the words appears on the corresponding list of second-hand car advertisements, namely *sports*, which is used in phrases like “sports sedan” and “true sports car experience”. Compared to classifiers used in second-hand car advertisements, it is worth noting that there are no words like *service*, *history* or *factory*, as it is self-evident that all advertised cars are new and come straight from the factory. Similarly, the abbreviations *UK* and *RHD* are not used because the target audience is not British and do not need a car that has a steering wheel on the right.

1. BMW	10	car	6
Infiniti	10	7. all-wheel	5
3. sports	8	Chevrolet	5
4. fuel	7	luxury	5
5. available	6	10. several words	4

*Table 12: Commonest classifiers in the analysed advertisements for new cars.*

The most frequently used descriptors are presented in Table 13 below. Clearly the two commonest words are *all-new* and *new*. As mentioned above, *new* is common in advertising

English, but here the slightly expanded version, *all-new*, is used even more often and typically with the model of the car, as in “all-new 370Z Nismo”, “all-new 2014 Corvette Stingray”, “all-new MKZ Hybrid” and “all-new Nissan Sentra”. Other words on the list seem to highlight the good qualities of the car, as in “higher performance”, “the best Civic”, “powerful, luxurious and advanced Acura”, “TDI clean diesel”, “premium sound” and “smallest detail”. When comparing the list to the second-hand car advertisements, it can be seen that, in addition to colour expressions, words like *original*, *recent*, *total* and *full* are missing, again because the advertised cars are new and there has been no need for “recent repaint” or “total restoration”.

1. all-new	30	6. clean	5
2. new	18	7. advanced	4
3. high	8	premium	4
4. good	6	small	4
powerful	6	10. several words	3

*Table 13: Commonest descriptors in the analysed advertisements for new cars.*

## 7 Discussion and Conclusions

At the beginning of this thesis it was stated that there is no absolute definition of the term *advertisement*, because advertisements are created for different kinds of products, media, techniques and target audience, for example. However, it is common for all advertisements to have a similar kind of purpose, which usually can be phrased as communicating the customers some information about the product and making them act in a certain way, that is, to buy the product or service in question. This study concentrates on printed car advertisements, which can be said to form a subgenre within the larger genre of advertising, because they contain similar kinds of sentence structures and word choices, for example.

It is possible to convince the potential customer by using several advertising principles, the most important ones being AIM, AIDA and USP. The first two abbreviations refer to the strategy which states that an advertisement must catch the attention of the potential customers and keep it in

order to make them act. Unique Selling Position means that the product must be advertised to the target audience as somehow different and better than all its competitors. Common techniques for doing this is to appeal either to reason or feelings of potential customers. Different linguistic strategies can be used as a device for advertising. For example, adjectives can function as trigger words because they can appeal to feelings. Many advertisements also address the audience by using, for instance, personal pronouns, questions and commands.

The focus of the present study was on premodifier sequences in advertising language. There are different opinions about which words can function as premodifiers, but usually adverbs, adjectives, participles, and nouns that occur before the head noun in the noun phrase are defined as premodifiers. Some premodifiers are more complex to analyse than others. For instance, it is not always easy to tell whether a combination of two nouns consists of a modifier and a head noun, or of just one compound noun. There are several scholars who discuss this problem, as, for example, Huddleston and Pullum (2006), Matthews (1991) and Bauer (1998), but their theories may lead to different results in individual cases.

The function of premodifiers is to describe and classify the head noun, in other words, to give more information about it. The premodifying sequence can consist of just one word, but especially in advertising language it is typical to use long and complex sequences. This is partially because long premodifier sequences take less space than corresponding postmodifiers would, but also because they can function as a single quality, and thus form unique combinations of premodifiers that attract the attention of the potential customer. In long premodifier sequences it is possible to use coordination, that is, to link words to each other by using conjunctions or punctuation symbols.

There are some rules that guide the order of premodifiers in complex premodifier sequences, but the majority of these rules are quite flexible. For example, it is typical for a premodifier sequence to be arranged from more subjective to more objective premodifiers. There are also

several scholars, such as Dixon (1982) and Huddleston and Pullum (2006), who outline the order in which attributive adjectives typically occur before the head noun. Feist (2009, 2012) divides the premodifier sequence into four zones: reinforcers, epithets, descriptors and classifiers. The words in these zones have different kinds of meaning. For example, descriptors are used to express descriptive information while classifiers have a referential meaning which can identify the head word.

Premodifier sequences usually contain words from several zones, and especially in advertising language combinations of different zones are used to express both facts and emotion, so that they can at the same time appeal to both reason and feelings. Often these combinations are very noticeable and creative because they are designed to attract the attention of the target audience, as are the unconventional colour terms that are also often used. In Steinvall's terms, not only Basic Colour Terms, such as *red*, *blue* and *black*, but also Elaborate Colour Terms like *turquoise* and *magenta* can be used. It is important for copywriters to create and use innovative and interesting colour terms so that the target audience thinks that the products are innovative and interesting as well.

This thesis is a case study of premodification found in the descriptions of second-hand cars in dealer advertisements. The analysed advertisements were collected from two British classic car magazines, *Classic & Sports Car* and *Octane*. In total, 271 second-hand car advertisements were analysed. The advertisements were analysed by answering nine research questions. The first three of them concentrated on the syntactic features of premodification sequence, the next three discussed the semantic features, and the last three the use of colour terms in the analysed advertisements. The thesis also contains a subsection where a sample of advertisements for new cars were analysed. These advertisements were collected from the American car magazine *Car and Driver*. The number of analysed advertisements for new cars was 62 and, since these advertisements do not use colour terms in the same way as the second-hand car advertisements do, only research questions 1–6 were

answered.

The first three research questions were used to study how many words occur before the head noun in the premodification sequence, in what order they are usually placed and how often they are coordinated. As a conclusion, it can be said that the premodifier sequences in the analysed second-hand car advertisements mainly differ from premodifier sequences in other registers by their length. Admittedly, more than a half of the analysed sequences consist of just one premodifier, but the number is still smaller than, for example, in the study by Biber et al. (1999). Sequences containing three premodifiers are quite frequent, and it is possible to find even sequences that contain eight or more premodifiers. On the other hand, the order of the premodifiers seems to be quite conventional, as most of the analysed cases follow the guidelines presented by several scholars. In addition to that, many constructions that may first seem uncommon can actually be explained with the help of submodification. This means that not all premodifiers actually modify the head but rather other premodifiers, which explains their order within the sequence.

The premodifiers in the analysed sequences are not coordinated very often. When coordination is used, the commonest coordinating device is the conjunction *and*. It is also worth noting that some punctuation symbols, such as an ampersand or a slash, can be used to mark coordination. The reason for the use of punctuation symbols is probably their briefness, because in relatively short advertisement texts like these, every word and even every character counts. By contrast, commas are not used very often in the analysed second-hand car advertisements. This can possibly be explained with the fact that if premodifiers are coordinated, the sequence loses its status as a unique combination, and becomes just a list of premodifiers. In addition to saving as much space as possible, the need to create extraordinary and even unique premodifier sequences can be argued to be one of the reasons why long premodifier sequences are used in the analysed advertisements.

Research questions 4–6 focused on the commonest semantic classes in the analysed

premodifier sequences, how many of the sequences combine different semantic classes, and what are the commonest words in each of the analysed classes. The results reveal that these second-hand car advertisements are dominated by classifiers. This is not very surprising when keeping in mind that it is typical of speciality magazines to target their advertisements to a specific audience by citing technical information expressed with the help of classifiers. Especially combinations of several classifiers give such technical information that it is not always clear if the target audience actually understands all of it. This is when in Cook's terms reason becomes tickle. It is also worth noting that when the audience is addressed by this kind of special information, they may feel flattered because they recognise terminology that requires expert knowledge.

Descriptors are mostly used to create a positive atmosphere. In those cases the premodifier does not really give any information but its function is to appeal to feelings. Descriptors can give some information as well, and often in these cases they are a part of a colour term. Reinforcers are quite rare in the analysed material, possibly because there is often not enough space for words that only have only intensifying meaning. It is quite common for copywriters to use both descriptors and classifiers in the same premodifier sequence. The reasons for this resemble those presented above with regard to the number of words in a premodifier sequence: the need to save space and create memorable and unique noun phrases.

The lists of commonest classifiers and descriptors contain many words that are used in fixed expressions so often that they can be called conventionalised. Especially the commonest words in the descriptor list are used even too frequently, because, for example, the word *exceptional* does not feel exceptional when it is repeated so often. Both lists contain words that highlight the originality of the car. This is not surprising since both analysed magazines concentrate on classic cars, and authenticity most likely is an important factor to the target audience. On the other hand, the potential customers may buy the cars for driving or even racing, which is why copywriters also use words like *new*, *recent* and *service* to demonstrate that the cars are still drivable.

The last three research questions dealt with how many words the colour terms consist of, whether they are Basic Colour Terms or Elaborate Colour Terms, and what the commonest colour terms used in these groups are. The results were analysed separately for colour terms in premodifying and non-premodifying positions to see if their usage differs from each other. It seems that colour terms are clearly used differently in premodifying and non-premodifying positions. In a premodifying position, colour terms consist frequently of only one word, which most often is a BCT. When colour terms premodify a noun, the head noun typically describes the interior or some other part of the car. When colour terms occur in a non-premodifying positions, they tend to be longer and unconventional. This is because a non-premodifying colour term usually describes the colour of the car, which is clearly considered to be more important than the interior of the car, for instance. New colour terms are created, for example, by using features of international racing colours and modifiers indicating hue, saturation and brightness. These creative colour terms are often quite short-lived, as they can be created to be used only once.

The frequent use of long and complex colour terms is very interesting because all the analysed advertisements actually contain a picture, so that all readers can see the colour of the car themselves. This is why it is possible to say that unconventional colour terms are not used solely because they give information. Rather, unconventional colour terms are used because they sound novel and appealing, and they are specifically designed to catch the attention of the customer and evoke positive connotations. The use of uncommon and creative colour terms is also interesting because car advertisements often are targeted primarily for men, but colour terms targeted for men are usually quite conventional.

The analysis of the advertisements for the new cars revealed that the premodification sequences are not remarkably different from those used in the second-hand car advertisements. The study of syntactic features reveals that premodifier sequences are in general a little shorter in the advertisements for new cars than in the second-hand car advertisements. The order of the

premodifiers seems to be even more conventional in the advertisements for new cars, since it is difficult to find examples that would violate the guidelines for premodifier order. Coordination is not used much in these advertisements, either. One of the greatest differences between the advertisements for new cars and the second-hand car advertisements seems to be the fact that the former clearly use more commas than the latter. Apart from commas, the advertisements for new cars do not use any other punctuation symbols for coordination. This is why it is possible to say that following grammatical norms seems to be more important than saving space in these advertisements.

When analysing the semantic features of premodifier sequences in the advertisements for new cars, it can be seen that they contain even more classifiers and are thus more technical than the second-hand car advertisements. The sequence consisting of two or more classifiers is the commonest combination in these advertisements, which is why some advertisements can be very difficult to understand for readers who are not members of the target audience. Descriptors and reinforcers are used to some extent, but many descriptor sequences actually only contain one descriptor. Even combinations of descriptors and classifiers are used a little less than in the second-hand car advertisements. This suggests that when compared to the copywriters of the second-hand car advertisements, the copywriters of the advertisements for new cars may depend less on textual devices. This is why the need to create unique premodifier combinations is seemingly not very great.

The lists of commonest classifiers and descriptors in the advertisements for new cars differ from those in the second-hand car advertisements. The classifier list contains several makes of car and lacks words like *history* and *factory*. The commonest words in the descriptor list are clearly *all-new* and *new*, while many common words from the corresponding second-hand car advertisement list, such as *original*, *full* and *recent*, are missing. These differences can at least partly be explained by the different product types of the advertisements. The advertisements for new cars advertise for

some specific model of a particular make of car. The advertisement advertises for several cars which are identical and come straight from the factory. By contrast, the second-hand car advertisements advertise for one car at the time. These cars come with a history: they have possibly had several owners, they may have participated in some famous races, or they have perhaps been repainted or repaired in some way. This is why the analysed second-hand car advertisements overall have a more descriptive tone.

The amount of material analysed for the present study is relatively extensive. The analysed advertisements were collected from more than one magazine and they come from different copywriters in different countries. The topic is discussed by answering nine research questions. The broadness of the study presented a challenge. Instead of trying to present all possible features of premodifier sequences in advertising language, only two or three features could be presented and then analysed. By concentrating on a few features it may have been possible to go deeper and to find some more common or uncommon usages of premodifiers.

Some of the research questions could have been discussed in a different way. For example, in some cases the difference between classifiers and descriptors, or descriptors and reinforcers, is not completely clear. The decision to exclude epithets from the analysis has affected the results as well. It would also have been possible to define noun phrases and premodifiers differently. For instance, even phrases that have an abbreviation as their head could have been analysed. Likewise it would have been possible not to analyse adverbs as premodifiers, since they usually modify the following premodifier rather than the head, which results in different kinds of submodification structures.

It would be possible to study the topic even further. For example, submodification could be discussed in more detail. It would also be interesting to analyse a greater number of advertisements for new cars, possibly published in several different magazines, to better be able to compare them to second-hand car advertisements. In addition to that, advertisements for different media could be

analysed. Is premodification different in the Internet advertisements, for example? Although multimodality was not analysed in this thesis, it would be interesting to study the pictures as well. For instance, it would be possible to study if colour terms are used differently in car advertisements that contain a picture when compared to those which do not.

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*Octane*. 2014, 128.

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## Appendix 1: List of the analysed dealer advertisements

Advertisements in *Octane*:

Runnymede Motor Company (p. 188)  
County Classics (p. 202)  
Copley Motorcars (p. 202)  
Classic Throttle Shop (p. 209)  
Murray Scott-Nelson (p. 209)

Advertisements in *Classic & Sports car*:

Coys (p. 5)  
The Hairpin Company (p. 73)  
Nutley Sports & Prestige Centre (p. 80)  
Fine & Classic (p. 83)  
The Stable Ltd. (p. 90)  
Classic Automobiles (p. 183)  
The Real Car Co (p. 187)  
Brian Classic & Co (p. 189)  
Paul Matty Sports Cars (p. 190)  
Specialized Vehicle Solutions Ltd. (p. 192)  
Ghost Motor Works Ltd (p. 194)  
Fantasy Junction (p. 197)  
Marreyt Classics (p. 199)  
Chequered Flag (p. 200)  
Total Headturners (p. 202)  
Autosport Designs Inc (p. 204)  
Percival Motor Company (p. 209)  
Attington Classics (p. 209)  
Exotic Classics (p. 209)  
UK Sports Cars (p. 209)  
Cleeve Wood Garage (p. 211)  
Robin Lawton (p. 213)  
Richard Thorne Classic Cars (p. 215)  
Fernhurst Motor Co (p. 215)  
Suffolk Jaguar (p. 215)  
Claremont Corvette (p. 216)  
Motor Classic & Competition Corp (p. 219)  
Sussex Sports Cars Ltd (p. 222)  
Classic Cars Manchester (p. 223)

## Appendix 2: List of the analysed advertisements for new cars

January 58: 7

Nissan (pp. 0–1)  
Porsche (pp. 4–5)  
Dodge (p. 15)  
Toyota (pp. 20–1)

March 58: 9

Honda (pp. 0–1)  
Infiniti (p. 11)  
Land Rover (p. 110)

April 58: 10

Honda (p. 0)  
Land Rover (p. 3)  
Nissan (p. 30)  
Infiniti (p. 114)

May 58: 11

MINI (pp. 0–1)  
Nissan (p. 36)  
Honda (p. 43)  
Subaru (p. 126)

June 58: 12

Jaguar (pp. 2–3)  
Jeep (pp. 6–7)  
Mercedes-Benz (p. 9)  
Porsche (pp. 16–7)  
Lincoln (pp. 32–3)  
Nissan (p. 41)  
Acura (pp. 54–5)  
Chevrolet (p. 138)

July 59: 1

Infiniti (pp. 0–1)  
Audi (p. 2)  
Lincoln (p. 5)  
Jeep (p. 11)  
Nissan (p. 21)  
Acura (p. 59)  
Mazda (p. 134)

August 59: 2

Mazda (p. 1)  
Jaguar (pp. 2–3)  
Chevrolet (7)  
Infiniti (18)  
Acura (45)

Nissan (52–3)  
Acura (60–1)

September 59: 3

Acura (pp. 0–1)  
Lexus (p. 5)  
Chevrolet (pp. 20–1)  
Nissan (pp. 34–5)

October 59: 4

Chevrolet (pp. 0–19)  
Mercedes-Benz (p. 4)  
Audi (p. 20)  
BMW (pp. 30–1)  
Nissan (p. 37)  
Infiniti ((pp. 50–1)  
Land Rover (p. 126)

November 59: 5

Porsche (p. 12)  
Infiniti (p. 17)  
Jaguar (p. 24)  
BMW (pp. 38–9)  
Chevrolet (pp. 56–7)  
Acura (pp. 70–1)  
Nissan (p. 81)  
Cadillac (p. 134)

December 59: 6

Jaguar (pp. 8–9)  
Kia (p. 17)  
BMW (pp. 40–1)  
Nissan (p. 65)  
Subaru (p. 79)  
Acura (p. 132)