Ellis 1999). Because of time and space limitations, for instance, advertisers are not able to include all possible information in a commercial message, so consumers must infer certain facts (Alba and Hutchinson 1987). Consumers also rely on inferences when they are faced with incomplete information but are not motivated to engage in external information search (Kardes 1993). The following sections will discuss various forms of inferences involved in the process of interpreting advertising messages.

**Interpretive inferences**

Interpretation is an active construction process by which input from advertisements is integrated with previously stored information. The purpose of interpretive inferences is to facilitate comprehension by bridging gaps in the knowledge necessary to derive the likely intent of a message (Alba and Hutchinson, 1987). Our interpretation of advertising information tends to be consistent with concepts and associations in memory as a result of these inferences (Lindsay and Norman 1972; Bettman 1979; Cohen, Miniard and Dickson 1980). Simplification inferences, coherence inferences and pragmatic implications are different forms of interpretive inferences.

**Simplification inferences.** Simplification inferences involve the abstraction of the overall meaning conveyed by specific information. For example, simplification will translate advertising claims such as “from 0 to 60 in 7 seconds” into more familiar terms, such as “fast,” or reduce a set of attributes (e.g., “fast, efficient, and handles well”) to a single concept (e.g., “high performance”). Note that these inferences are evaluative when the information on which they are based is not. In addition, simplification inferences allow integration of specific attribute information into a global evaluation (Alba and Hutchinson 1987).