

Published in *La Corónica*, 23.2 (1995): 118-22.

Software Review: *Grammatik* in Spanish (\$99 for registered WordPerfect users).

An English-language grammar and style checker first appeared some 10 years ago. *Grammatik* for the CP/M operating system, a predecessor of MS-DOS, checked text against a dictionary of wordy, obtuse, sexist, and jargon-filled words and phrases. At present there are to my knowledge four programs that assist writers of English both by checking against a dictionary of problems and errors, and by limited sentence, style, and punctuation analysis. These are: *Grammatik* (now owned by WordPerfect), *Correct Grammar*, which I use regularly and which is now owned by WordStar, *RightWriter* (which my wife uses regularly), and MLA's *Editor*. A comparison of these programs is outside the scope of this review.

Since I write in Spanish and despite my best efforts make embarrassing mistakes in agreement and usage, and because I long for a way to automate the correction of routine errors in student compositions, I have eagerly awaited a Spanish grammar and style checker (one for French has been available for some time). I have inquired in Spain of many vendors, and checked the ads in Spanish computer magazines. Finally I concluded that such a program would probably be developed in the U.S., as Spanish spelling checkers and translation software have been. (Does anyone remember *Escribién*, the first Spanish-language spelling checker? I am proud to say I bought the first copy sold, later sold it to Tony Cárdenas.)

WordPerfect added a Spanish-language spell checker and thesaurus (dictionary of synonyms and antonyms) with version 5.1. Publishers of computer-assisted translation programs offer programs that provide on-line display of grammatical rules and verb conjugations. Yet until November 1994, when the Spanish version of *Grammatik* was released, there has never been a program that checked and corrected Spanish usage and grammar. If any reader knows otherwise I would be most grateful for information.

As has been the case with spell checkers, that were originally accessories produced and sold by independent companies, grammar and style checkers have been purchased by major software publishers and incorporated in their programs. When WordPerfect acquired *Grammatik* in 1993, I suspected that here might be my solution. WordPerfect sells German and French versions of *Grammatik*. A Spanish-language *Grammatik* was soon listed as forthcoming in the company's product database (what their order-takers use), but it was never released, and the release date was constantly pushed back. In March of 1995 I investigated its status, and after two days of phone calls, which went up as high as the head of International Marketing for Novell Consumer Products, I did locate the Spanish *Grammatik*.

The Spanish version of *Grammatik* is available only as part

of the Spanish language version of WordPerfect for Windows (WPWIN) 6.1. It is NOT included in the optional Spanish language modules for WPWIN or WPDOS (although I urged Novell to reconsider this). Nor it is available for any other platform; the Spanish versions of WPWIN and WPDOS 6.0 include only the English-language *Grammatik*. (Even though this version of *Grammatik* bears the revision number 6.0a, this does not mean that it was a part of WP 6.0; WP 6.0 included English *Grammatik* 5.0. Spanish *Grammatik* 6.0 is the first version.) Plans for WPDOS 6.1, English or Spanish, have not been announced. Because of the costs of supporting constantly changing file formats from a variety of word processors, the Spanish *Grammatik* may never be released as a stand-alone product, according to Novell.

Since the Spanish-language WPWIN 6.1 must be purchased through Novell's International Division, I add that the person who took my order, after instructions from the Novell department head already mentioned, was Becky Nichol, at 800 451-5151. The price for a registered user of any version of WP is \$99. The English version of WPWIN 6.1 can also be purchased for the same price. Stand-alone *Grammatik* (French and German) itself costs \$99, and by purchasing the entire Spanish package one has the spelling checker, hyphenation module, and (if wished) Spanish menus and help files.

Stated hardware requirements include 6 Meg of memory. A full installation requires 32M of disk space; a minimum installation half of that, but omits *Grammatik* and the spell checker. Also required are Microsoft Windows 3.1 or Windows for Workgroups 3.11, and a VGA monitor. A mouse is described as optional, and mouse functions can be duplicated from the keyboard. Yet I have not found an exhaustive discussion of how to do this, and have yet to find how to access some very basic functions of the program without using the mouse. I tested it on a Gateway 486 4DX2-66V with 8 megabytes of RAM, using MS-DOS 6.0 and Windows 3.1. The program runs slightly slower on this machine than does WP 5.1 on a 386SX-16.

The instructions nowhere explain how to install two different language versions of WPWIN on the same machine. I ran the install program for each with the default installation and the redundant program files overwrote themselves, so I ended up with approximately what I wanted, a single copy of shared program and font files, but both dictionaries, both *Grammatiks*, and help files and templates in both languages. To change the language of menus and help files requires exiting and restarting the program.

One should note that according to the License, the program is sold "As Is." Technical support is offered on a "reasonable efforts basis only," and the ability to fill support requests (i.e., to provide answers to questions and solutions to problems) is specifically disavowed. It did not surprise me to find that the program is buggy, getting hung in loops, and crashing several times with messages such as "GKWIN60 caused a General Protection Fault in module GKWIN60.EXE at 0001:8353." The latter required resetting the computer.

This is the program that has finally forced me to use Windows, which until now I have succeeded in avoiding. While WPWIN will import files from a variety of word processing file formats, and export the output back to them, the Spanish *Grammatik* must be run from within WPWIN. Those unfamiliar with Windows, and WPWIN in particular, should expect to spend time learning new commands, new key assignments, and puzzling out by trial and error the new ways to carry out familiar tasks, since the many changes are not always addressed in manuals and help files. Familiarity with WP 6.0 for DOS or Windows, with which WPWIN 6.1 shares file and macro format, will make the process quicker. How long this will take I cannot say; my problems are not all resolved. WPWIN 6.1 does indeed come with many new and helpful features. Note that, as with the Spanish dictionaries of WP 5.1 and 6.0, Spanish text must be identified with a language code marker; the default language is always English, even in the Spanish version of the program. The insertion of this code at the beginning of every document can be automated.

As a quick guide to the capabilities of the Spanish *Grammatik*, the following is a list, exported from a help screen, of the classes of errors that the program flags. The errors of alphabetization in this list are present in the original, and an example of the unpolished air that the program often exhibits.

For each type of error there is a discussion with examples of correct and incorrect usages. As reference works, the program cites F. Corripio, *Incorrecciones, dudas y normas gramaticales*, J. Martínez de Sousa, *Dudas y errores del lenguaje*, M. Seco Reymundo, *Diccionario de dudas y dificultades de la lengua española*, and L. Gómez Torrego, *Manual de español correcto*. It also claims, in word usage, to be following the Real Academia Española.

- Acento diacrítico
- Abreviaturas: usos incorrectos
- Adjetivos: usos incorrectos
- Adverbios: usos incorrectos
- Alternativas del usuario
- Alternativas automáticas del usuario
- Anglicismos
- Apócope
- Arcaísmos
- Catalán, Gallego, Vasco
- Coloquialismos
- Comienzo de frase repetido
- Comparativo y Superlativo
- Complementación verbal
- Concordancia
- Concordancia: adj. especiales
- Concordancia: otros casos
- Concordancia: pronombre
- Concordancia: sujeto-verbo
- Concordancia: sust. especiales
- Dequeísmo

Determinantes: usos incorrectos
Escritura de los números
Expresiones incorrectas
Expresiones preferidas
Extranjerismos
Galicismos
Grupos preposicionales
Homónimos
Infinitivo
Italianismos
Latinismos
Lenguaje literario
Marcas registradas
Mayúsculas
Nombres geográficos
Oración demasiado larga
Orden de palabras
Ortografía
Palabras repetidas
Palabras separadas
Palabras sexistas
Palabras superfluas
Puntuación incompleta
Participio: usos incorrectos
Posesivo: usos incorrectos
Posible confusión de sgdos.
Preposiciones: usos incorrectos
Pronombre: loísmo, laísmo
Pronombres: usos incorrectos
Puntuación
Puntuación y conjunciones
Párrafo
Redundancia
Tiempo verbal
Verbos: usos incorrectos
Voz pasiva

In the *Grammatik* help files there are discussions of each of these categories of rules, together with examples. The application of each type of rule can be turned on or off at will, permanently or temporarily. Their application can also be chosen through a menu of writing styles, each of which includes a profile of relevant rules and quantitative criteria: Ortografía plus, Verificación rápida, Verificación exhaustiva, Texto formal, Texto no formal, Técnico, Periodístico, Comercial.

These rules are understandably chosen thinking of the needs of native Spanish speakers, rather than those of English speakers writing a second language. Native speakers apparently do not make mistakes in the use of *ser* and *estar*, or write “quiero voy a casa,” so these types of errors are not treated. Usage of the subjunctive is also missing.

The program, which incorporates a sentence parser, is good at finding errors in adjective-noun and verb-subject agreement. “Mi padres,” “la alma” (for “el alma”), and “mi madre es her-

moso” are flagged. However, it missed “una estudiante malo,” apparently because *estudiante* can be of either gender. It will query the accentuation of homonyms (él-el, mí-mi), though “sé habla español” and “no se como hablar el español” were ignored. It also failed on “Voy a dar la palabra a la” (for “ella”), used by a panel member from eastern Europe at the Toronto AIH congress. Like every program of its class, *Grammatik* also queries many items that are correct. A marked manuscript can be generated.

In short, the program is, like its English siblings and cousins, an aid, not a panacea. Yet I anticipate using it regularly and am grateful that WordPerfect has finally brought it out. To my surprise, I’m getting somewhat comfortable with Microsoft Windows, and WP 6.1 seems more pleasant than 6.0 ever did.

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