Chapter I: The Start-up Checklist

Welcome to Dragon NaturallySpeaking®, one of the most advanced speech recognition engines in the world. It essentially allows you to dictate into a PC and control it with Voice Commands, instead of using your keyboard and mouse.

To run Dragon NaturallySpeaking® properly, first check that you have the right PC configuration and observe some critical installation guidelines, as introduced in this Chapter.

1. HARDWARE

ScanSoft's minimum recommendations for Dragon Natural-lySpeaking® 5.0 and XP are:
- Intel® Pentium® II/400 MHz processor or equivalent AMD® processor
- 128 MB of RAM
- 300 MB of free hard disk space for installation
- Creative® Labs Sound Blaster® 16 or compatible sound card.

However, speech recognition is the most demanding software you can currently run on a PC. We therefore recommend that you use the most powerful PC you can, in order to achieve professional results, at least a Pentium III running at 500 MHz with sufficient RAM. With a Pentium IV, we strongly recommend a minimum of 512 MB of PC 266MHz DDRAM modules, or better, if you can afford it and your PC supports them.

Note what a leading vendor of speech recognition products — Larry Allen— says concerning the need to use only high-quality memory:

"133MHz memory (on a 133MHz bus) is preferable to the slower 100MHz or 66MHz memory. RAMBus memory does not help enough with NaturallySpeaking to justify its much higher cost. NaturallySpeaking uses memory much more than most other applications, so that memory speed plays a more important role in its performance. Don't be fooled by benchmarks with other applications.

Watch out for cheap memory or for overclocking memory modules. More than one NaturallySpeaking problem has been solved by replacing memory. These problems are random and can be difficult to diagnose. But the problems are real, and even many of the conventional memory testing programs don't test memory as much as NaturallySpeaking. Just because 'all my other programs work', do not assume that the memory on your system is in perfect working order".

2. SOFTWARE

2.1. WINDOWS® OPERATING SYSTEM

Dragon NaturallySpeaking® 5.0 and XP are compatible with:
- Windows® 98
- Windows® NT
- Windows® 2000
- Windows® XP.

Version 5.0 needs manual installation under Windows® XP, whereas version XP installs automatically under this system.

2.2. MICROSOFT WORD®

Dragon 5.0 and XP require the latest Service Packs of Microsoft Word® 97, 2000 and 2002 for maximum compatibility.

Note that Microsoft designates Service Packs for Word® in a rather complex and confusing way. For instance, in the Spanish version of Microsoft Word® 2000:
- you see "Microsoft Word 2000 (9.0.3821 SR-1)" for Ser-vice Pack 1, in the "About Microsoft Word" window
- whereas you see only "Microsoft Word 2000 (9.0.4402 SR-1)", yes SR-1, for Service Pack 2!

This is because to install Service Pack 2 you must already have Service Pack 1 in your computer.

3. PROPER ORDER OF INSTALLATION

First, defragment in full your hard disk with the Windows® "Disk Defragmenter" or a third party utility.

Then, install the software in the following order:
- first, Microsoft Word® Service Pack 2
- second, Dragon NaturallySpeaking®.

If you do not proceed in this way, some special and complex Voice Commands of Dragon, for instance "Delete Previous (Next) X Characters (Words)" —where "X" means any number from 1 to 10— may not work. The "c000005" Dragon error message may also appear frequently.

4. PROPER ORDER OF USE

Finally, always open Dragon NaturallySpeaking® before Microsoft Word®, as both applications compete for crucial RAM me-mory. The one you open the first always gets the biggest slice of the cake!

When you proceed in this correct way, you get the message "Mi-crosoft Word Support Loaded" during the process of ope-ning up Word. This means that Dragon is ready to work.