

Sixth Message Understanding Conference (MUC-6)

**Proceedings of a Conference
Held in
Columbia, Maryland
November 6-8, 1995**

Sponsored by:

**Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency
Information Technology Office
Tipster Text Program**

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Sixth Message Understanding Conference.

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Preface

This volume documents the proceedings of the Sixth Message Understanding Conference (MUC-6), which was held on 6-8 November, 1995, in Columbia, Maryland. The conference was sponsored by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, Information Technology Office (D. Gunning, Program Manager) under the auspices of the Tipster Text Program and was organized by the MUC-6 program committee, co-chaired by Beth Sundheim (NCCOSC/NRaD) and Ralph Grishman (NYU). Other members of the committee were Chinatsu Aone (SRA Corp.), Lois Childs (Lockheed Martin Corp.), Nancy Chinchor (SAIC), Jerry Hobbs (SRI International), Boyan Onyshkevych (U.S. Dept. of Defense), Marc Vilain (The MITRE Corp.), Takahiro Wakao (Univ. of Sheffield), and Ralph Weischedel (BBN Systems and Technologies).

The topic of the conference was performance assessment of text analysis software systems that analyze free text in accordance with prespecified task definitions. To represent the output of analysis, the systems either insert certain types of annotations into the text or extract certain types of information from the text. Prior to the conference, systems were developed and tested on up to four different tasks: insertion of Named Entity annotations, insertion of Coreference annotations, extraction of Organization and Person information, and extraction of event information concerning corporate management changes.

The conference was attended by representatives of organizations that participated in the evaluation, US Government representatives, and other invited guests. Sessions included task overviews presented by T. Wakao, C. Aone, L. Childs, and B. Sundheim; a presentation concerning MUC-6 scoring methodology by N. Chinchor; an overview of evaluation results by B. Sundheim; system demonstrations and papers on systems and test results given by the participating organizations in the evaluation; and presentations on the Coreference task and other topics by some of the evaluation participants, accompanied by discussions led by R. Grishman to critique the evaluation and make recommendations for future evaluations.

Papers in this volume reflect the information presented at the conference. The introductory paper by Grishman and Sundheim provides additional background, and the paper by Vilain et al. elaborates on the Coreference scoring method, which was new for this evaluation.

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