

SpaceOps-2025, ID # 368

**Title: Operations Automation and Optimization**

**Keitumetse Setshedi,**

South African National Space Agency (SANSA), Farm No 502JQ, Hartebeesthoek, District Krugersdorp,  
ksetshedi@sansa.org.za

**Abstract**

This research explores how operation automation and optimization can transform operational processes. The paper presents a groundbreaking framework for optimizing space operations using voice-activated remote operation and automation system (VAROA). By implementing voice recognition technology and automation, the study shows potential for reduced manual workload, improved efficiency and enhanced customer satisfaction in space operation. The key findings from interviews and case studies highlight the importance of automation in minimizing manual errors, improving customer-operator communication, enhancing user experience and promoting hands-free operations. The research concludes that voice-activated remote operation and automation system can revolutionize space exploration, enabling more sustainable, secure and efficient space operations.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In today’s fast-paced business world, companies across various industries face increasing pressure to enhance operational efficiency, reduce costs and improve customer service. However, language barriers, technical issues and inefficient communication protocols can lead to errors, delays and missed opportunities. Operation automation and optimization are powerful tools that can help transform operational processes.

Using technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) (), machine learning (ML) and robotics, companies can automate repetitive tasks and optimize resources; as a result, improved accuracy, speed and cost savings in operations can be realized. Despite the potential benefits, there is a lack of research on the application of voice-activated technologies in remote operation and automation. This paper proposes a voice-activated remote operation and automation system (VAROA) using voice command to control and automate operations remotely with focus on operation control mission industries. The aim is to improve operational performance, efficiency and communication. The objectives for implementing the system would include:

### 1.1 Primary Objectives

- 1.1.1 Improve communication efficiency by enhancing the accuracy and speed of communication between customers and the operating team through the reduction of repetitive commands.
- 1.1.2. Increase customer satisfaction by providing convenient, efficient and accurate communication experience.
- 1.1.3. Reduce errors and misunderstandings caused by language barriers by ensuring that customer requests are accurately understood and fulfilled.

### 1.2 Secondary Objectives

- 1.2.1 Enhance operational efficiency by automating routine tasks and reducing the workload of operations teams, allowing them to focus on high-value tasks.
- 1.2.2 Increase accessibility by providing customers with the freedom to communicate in their native languages and still achieve their intended communication goals.

## 2. BACKGROUND

The use of voice-activated commands in operation automation and optimization can provide significant benefits. For instance, a study by NASA explored the use of voice management systems for space applications, highlighting the potential for voice-based controls to enable hands-free and eye-free interaction. This can be particularly useful in industrial settings where workers may need to focus on critical tasks while interacting with automated systems. The implementation of voice-activated commands can improve efficiency and productivity in several ways:

- Voice-activated commands can enable workers to perform tasks more quickly and accurately, reducing the need for manual input and minimizing errors.
- The use of the innovative system can also facilitate a more human-centered approach to automation, allowing workers to interact with the system in a more natural way.

While the innovative concept of voice-activated remote operation and automation system (VAROA) offers numerous advantages, the potential drawbacks such as the fear of job losses due to reduced personnel requirements are acknowledged. As part of this research, interviews were conducted with fellow employees to gain a deeper understanding of the current challenges in operations and the opportunities that can be explored through automation and optimization. The potential impact of automation on job security was one of the key concerns raised during the interviews.

Many respondents expressed worries that the increased use of automation technologies threatens their job roles. However, others noted that while automation may replace some routine tasks, it could also create new job opportunities in areas such as maintenance, programming and supervision. Moreover, the benefits of automation, including improved efficiency, accuracy and customer satisfaction, could lead to increased competitiveness and growth, ultimately creating new job opportunities. The concern about job security and the potential benefits of voice-activated command highlights the need for careful consideration and planning when implementing automation

technologies. This paper will explore the potential benefits and challenges of voice-activated remote operation and automation including its impact on job security.

### 3. CASE STUDIES FOR VOICE AUTOMATION

Voice automation systems have been successfully adopted by various organization across the industries to improve operational efficiency, enhance customer experience and reduced costs. The following case studies illustrate the benefits and application of voice automation in real-world scenarios.

#### 3.1 Case Study: *Honey voice automated solutions*

Honeywell implemented a voice-automated solution for a large distribution and warehouse business, enabling workers to perform tasks hands-free and eyes-free. The results showed a significant reduction in task completion time from 16.1 seconds to 9.4 seconds. [4]

#### 3.2 Case Study: *Cardinal Peak’s Voice-Enabled Smart Home Automation*

Cardinal Peak collaborated with a leading provider of automation and networking systems to develop a voice-enabled smart home tablet. The tablet integrated Alexa voice capabilities, enabling users to control various smart home devices with voice commands. [5]

#### 3.3 Case Study: *Zfort Group’s Language-specific voice recognition system*

Zfort Group developed a language-specific voice recognition system for healthcare clients, enabling accurate voice recognition for specific medical terms. The system was trained on a custom dataset and achieved high accuracy rate. [6]

#### 3.4 Case Study: *Deepgram’s AI Voice Agents*

Deepgram’s AI voice agents were implemented in a call centre to automate customer service interactions. The agents used speech-to-text, natural language processing and text-to-speech technologies to provide 24/7 customer support and reduced waiting time.[7]

#### 3.5 Case Study: *DHL’s Voice-powered Warehouse Operations*

DHL implemented a voice-powers warehouse management system to improve efficiency and accuracy in their operations. The system used voice commands to guide workers through tasks, reducing errors and increasing productivity by 25%. [8]

#### 3.6 Case Study: *NASA’s Voice User Interface (VUI) for Autonomous systems in Space Exploration*

In space operation, NASA’s Artemis program initiated a project to develop a Voice User Interface (VUI) for autonomous systems. The goal was to help astronauts interact with the spacecraft’s autonomous systems more efficiently. This interaction was to be facilitated by voice and speech communications as voice-based controls allow users to interact hands-free and eye-free, enabling them to focus on critical tasks. The goal of their project was to explore the knowledge and technology needed to successfully design effective Voice User Interfaces (VUIs) for autonomous system utilizing Human Centered Design (HCD) principles.

##### 3.6.1 Objective:

The main objective of the project was to:

- a. Develop a Voice User Interface (VUI) that can interact efficiently with crew members and the autonomous systems.
- b. Improve safety and efficiency of space operations by reducing manual errors and increasing response time.
- c. Enhance the user experience for astronauts and mission control personnel.

##### 3.6.2 Results:

The VUI was successfully developed and integrated into NASA’s platform for autonomous systems. The results demonstrated

- a. Improved efficiency: Voice commands reduced the time required to execute tasks by 30%.
- b. Enhanced safety: Voice-controlled system reduced risk of manual errors by 25%.

- c. Increased user satisfaction: Astronauts and mission control personnel reported a 90% satisfaction rate with Voice User Interface (VUI).

### **3.6.3 Conclusion:**

The development of Voice User Interface (VUI) for autonomous systems in space exploration demonstrated the potential of human-centered design principles in improving the safety, efficiency and user experience for space operations. [1]

Several companies in South Africa are utilizing voice automation systems to enhance their operation. To name few, Intella Voice & Mobile has developed a South African English acoustic engine which has been successfully implemented in various industries including health care and finance. Companies like TransUnion also implemented voice biometrics to improve authentication and reduce fraud. These case studies demonstrate how voice automation can improve operational efficiency, accuracy, productivity as well as enhance customer experience in various industries. The proposed idea of implementing voice automation in operations has been validated by these case studies; therefore, it can be argued that it has the potential to bring significant value to organizations.

The voice automation concept was born out of the need to address human errors caused by communication barriers between customers and operators during our operational control missions. Implementing voice-activated remote operations and automation system (VAROA) in operations can indeed help resolve communication barriers between customers and operators, reducing human errors in routine daily operations and mission control supports particularly in scenarios where language barriers exist.

### **3.7 Case Study: *Overcoming communication barriers in operations mission control using voice-activated remote operation and automation system (VAROA)***

The South African National Space Agency’s (SANSA’s) operation mission control department frequently interacts with clients from diverse cultural and language background including Asia and European countries. In most instances, the team faces communication challenges due to accent and pronunciation. These communication barriers lead to misunderstandings, misinterpretations of clients’ requests and eventually repeated requests for clarification. To clarify their needs, clients are often required to send written text via email which results in delayed feedback and prolonged service time.

The experience highlights the need for innovative solutions to facilitate effective communication in multilingual and multicultural settings. This proposed new system will help interpret diverse accents into one formal language offering a promising solution in addressing the language barriers. By leveraging such system, SANSA operations team can improve communication efficiency, reduce errors and enhance customer service.

#### **3.7.1 Problem statement**

The existing communication process is time consuming, prone to errors and inefficient, affecting customer satisfaction and operational productivity.

#### **3.7.2 Proposed Solution**

Implementing a voice-activated remote operation and automation system (VAROA), would enable clients to send voice commands directly to the system, bypassing the operator involvement which may result in:

- a. **Improved communication accuracy** – reduce misunderstanding and errors caused by language barriers.
- b. **Enhance operational efficiency** – streamline communication, eliminating the need for repeated clarifications and email/teleport exchanges.
- c. **Improve customer service** – provide more convenient, efficient and accurate communication experience for clients. Voice automation systems have been successfully adopted by various organization across the industries to improve operational efficiency, enhance customer experience and reduced costs.

## **4. MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY**

This methodology outlines the anticipated steps in designing and implementing voice-activated remote operation and automation system (VAROA). VAROA would be integrated with the existing infrastructure for the antenna control

unit. The system aims to improve the efficiency and accuracy of antenna operations by leveraging voice recognition technology. To achieve this, a comprehensive approach must be taken to incorporate hardware and software components. The system design and implementation process would involve several stages including system architect design, software development and integration. The process provides a detailed account of each stage including the tools and technologies used to enable reproduction of the work.

#### 4.1 System design

The voice automation and optimization system to control the antenna control unit (ACU) consists of three primary components:

##### 4.1.1 Voice recognition Software

Will be used to processes voice command and converts them into digital signals which will be integrated with the antenna control unit system.

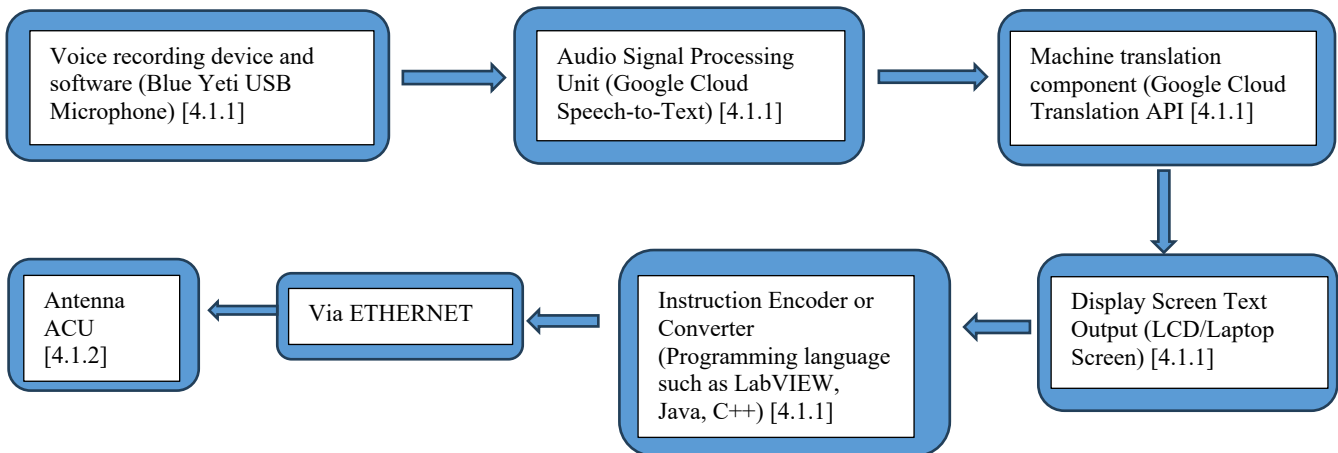
##### 4.1.2 Antenna Control Unit (ACU)

Receive the digital signals from the voice recognition software to control the antenna’s position and settings accordingly and provide feedback to the voice recognition software for confirmation.

##### 4.1.3 Manual Override

Allows operation technician to manually control the antenna in case of system network failure to ensure continued functionality and safety.

#### 4.2 Voice-activated remote operation and automation system (VAROA) flow chart diagram



#### 4.3 DATA FLOW CHART

4.3.1 **Voice recording device and software (Blue Yeti USB Microphone):** The USB will be connected to computer to capture voice instructions and send cleaned-up audio signal to the audio signal processing unit. The Blue Yeti USB microphone is preferred for the system because it has built-in noise-cancelling capabilities. This kind of microphone uses techniques such as cardioid polar system to reduce background.

4.3.2 **Audio Signal Processing Unit (Google Cloud Speech-to-Text):** The voice recognition software will transcribe audio file into text output.

4.3.3 **Machine translation component (Google Cloud Translation API):** Translate spoken language (Spanish, French, Zulu, etc.) into English in real time ensuring effective communication.

4.3.4 **Display Screen Text Output (LCD/Laptop Screen):** The transcribed text output will be displayed on the screen. This will help the users to verify their voice instructions to see if they are being accurately transcribed and they can easily monitor the status of their instructions for troubleshooting any issue that may arise.

4.3.5 **Instruction Encoder or Converter:** Convert text output into machine-readable code instructions such as binary or hexadecimal format that the antenna control system can understand, enabling the system to execute the command.

4.3.6 **Via Ethernet:** The instruction encoder will communicate with the antenna control unit (ACU) via ethernet to adjust position and settings.

4.3.7 **Antenna ACU:** For the antenna to adjust position and settings based on the command received and point to the space craft.

4.3.8 **Manual Override:** In the event of an issue, operators will revert to normal operational procedure, where commands are manually sent to the antenna control unit to position it.

VAROA will address identified communication challenges and operational inefficiencies.

#### 4.4 **Training and support to operation personnel**

During the interviews with colleagues to gather feedback on the concept implementation, many expressed concerns about potential job losses.

To work effectively with automated systems and minimize job loss risks, operators can:

1. Develop complementary skills: Focus on skills that will expand automation.
2. Acquire maintenance and troubleshooting skills: Learn to maintain, repair, and troubleshoot automated systems.
3. Use data analysis: Optimize system performance and identify areas for improvement.
4. Automate routine tasks: Focus on high-value tasks that require human expertise.
5. Pursue additional training: Contribute to various aspects of operations to remain valuable.

Moreover, the system will be implemented in a way that requires operators to receive training on its operation, which will also enhance their skills and knowledge in using applicable software. Nonetheless, human intervention will always be necessary to some extent.

By adopting these strategies, operators can work effectively with automated systems, enhance their skills, and minimize job loss risks.

## 5. RESULTS

Based on the result of case studies on voice-controlled systems and their functionality, voice-activated remote operation and automation system (VAROA) has the potential to achieve high accuracy in reducing operation time for mission control task, improve communication by reducing human errors involved, reducing the need for manual input, and improving customer service satisfaction.

These expected outcomes are based on the capabilities of the system’s components including the voice recognition software. By leveraging these technologies, the system has the potential to improve the efficiency and accuracy of antenna control operations.

## 6. DISCUSSION

### 6.1 **Overcoming Communication Barriers**

Effective communication is crucial in space operations but sometimes there are problems that can stop people from communicating well. This project finds a way to solve these problems by using voice recording automation and optimization systems to control antennas.

### 6.2 **Enhancing Space Operations**

The successful implementation of voice-activated remote operation and automation system (VAROA) and optimization for antenna control can enhance space operations by:

- a. Improving communication reliability: reduced errors and miscommunication that arise from manual operations.
- b. Increasing operational efficiency: Automate routine tasks, freeing up personnel to focus on higher-priority tasks.

### 6.3 **Future Applications**

This technology can be used in many future space projects such as:

**6.3.1 Exploring deep space:** Voice-controlled antennas can help spacecraft communicate with earth.

**6.3.2 Space station work:** Automated antenna control systems can improve communication on space stations.

## 7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this project demonstrates how voice activated automation and optimization systems can help control antennas. By solving communication challenges and making space operations more efficient, this technology can play a big role in advancing space exploration. The implications of VAROA implementation would include improved performance, reduced errors, enhanced productivity, advanced customer service. Ultimately, operators will be able to focus on more complex and strategic tasks.

*Furthermore, the successful implementation of VAROA in SANSAs Space Operations can have benefits such as:*

- **Enhanced safety:** By minimizing the risk of human error, voice-controlled system can contribute to a safer working environment for ground station personnel.
- **Increase productivity:** Automation can free up personnel to concentrate on higher level tasks, leading to increased productivity and efficiency.
- **Improved communication:** Voice-controlled system can facilitate clearer and more efficient communication between the customer and the operation personnel reducing misunderstanding and errors.

*In addition, this technology can pave the way for future advancement in space exploration such as:*

- **Deep space mission:** Voice-controlled systems can enable more efficient communication and operation of space craft during long duration missions.
- **Space station operation:** Automation can enhance the management of the use of resources and personnel in space station.

## **Appendix A (Interviews questions)**

The following are the questions asked during the interview with the colleagues:

1. What is your input regarding system automation in operations?
2. How do you think voice-controlled systems can improve operations?
3. What challenges do you foresee in implementing the voice-controlled system in operations?
4. How do you think voice-controlled system can enhance communication between operator and client?
5. What training or support do you think would be necessary for the operators to effectively use voice-controlled system to enhance efficiency and productivity to improve customer service?
6. Do you think this voice-controlled system will replace operators and reduce job opportunities?
7. Are there any existing voice-controlled systems or technologies that are used in operations or in space explorations?

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to SANSA Space Operations for providing me with the platform to explore and showcase my innovative idea for improving space operations for future use for generations. I also appreciate the support and valuable insights provided by my colleagues, who shared their expertise and feedback during the interviews. Their contributions were instrumental in shaping the concept of a voice recording automation system to optimize space operation control system globally.

This concept would not have been possible without the extensive research and in-depth knowledge shared by various researchers and authors in the field of voice recognition systems, automation and space operations control systems. I am confident that this concept will contribute to the development of more efficient and effective space operation control systems leading to improved service delivery and enhanced reputation for our country.

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