

Voice.AI Gateway API

Version 2.0



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Related Documentation

Document Name
Voice.AI Gateway Product Description
Voice.AI Gateway Integration Guide
Voice.AI Gateway One-Click Dialogflow Integration Guide
AudioCodes Phone Number Connector

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Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
	Purpose	1
	Targeted Audience	1
2	Bot API	2
	Overview	2
	Conversation Flow	2
	API	4
	Before You Begin	4
	Configuration	4
	Creation of a Conversation	4
	Sending and Receiving Activities	6
	Conversation Refresh	9
	Ending a Conversation	10
	Health Check	11
	Security	12
	TLS Usage	12
	Authentication with Bot	12
3	Text-to-Speech API	13
4	Speech-to-Text API	15

1 Introduction

AudioCodes Voice.AI Gateway enhances chatbot functionality by allowing human communication with chatbots through voice (voicebot), offering an audio-centric user experience. Integrating the Voice.AI Gateway into your chatbot environment provides you with a single-vendor solution, assisting you in migrating your text-based chatbot experience into a voice-based chatbot.

This document provides AudioCodes Voice.AI Gateway's application programming interface (API):

- Bot API - see [Bot API](#) on page 2
- Text-to-speech API - see [Text-to-Speech API](#) on page 13
- Speech-to-text API - see [Speech-to-Text API](#) on page 15



Prior to reading this document, it's recommended that you read the [Voice.AI Gateway Product Description](#) to familiarize yourself with AudioCodes Voice.AI Gateway architecture and solution.

Purpose

This guide provides AudioCodes' APIs for connecting your bot service (proprietary bot or middleware) to AudioCodes Voice.AI Gateway.

Targeted Audience

This guide is intended for developers of bot frameworks and middleware.

2 Bot API

AudioCodes Voice.AI Gateway provides a generic bot API that can be used for connecting it to any bot service that doesn't use the standard bot frameworks (such as Microsoft Azure, Amazon Lex, and Google Dialogflow). This Customer-proprietary bot service could also employ middleware that proxies between it and the Voice.AI Gateway. In such a scenario, it's preferable that the Voice.AI Gateway connects directly to your framework or middleware.

AudioCodes bot API offers the following benefits:

- Easy to implement
- Simple authentication scheme
- Traverses firewalls and HTTP proxies
- Enables the bot to use the Voice.AI Gateway's wide range of features

Overview

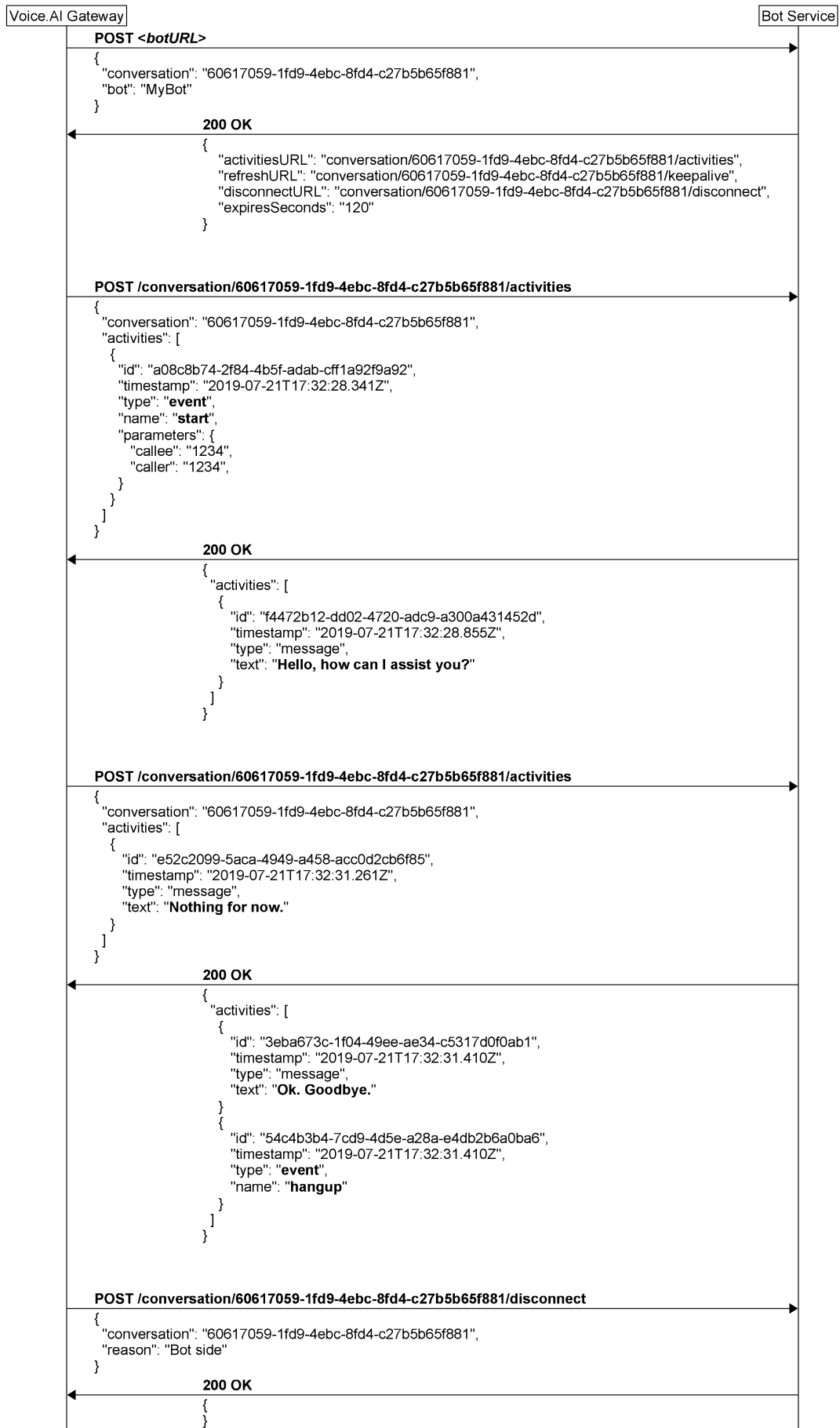
- Roles in the bot API:
 - Client: Voice.AI Gateway
 - Server: Your bot service
- You should implement the server-side of the API so that the Voice.AI Gateway can connect to it.
- The API uses HTTP. All requests by the Voice.AI Gateway are sent to the bot service.
- The API only conveys textual messages (not voice), as the Voice.AI Gateway uses speech-to-Text (STT) and Text-to-Speech (TTS) engines.

Conversation Flow

The conversation flow between the Voice. AI Gateway and the bot service is as follows:

1. The Voice.AI Gateway creates a new conversation by using a pre-configured URL.
2. The reply contains URLs for posting messages to the conversation.
3. Throughout the conversation, the Voice.AI Gateway posts the user's messages to the given URL, while the responses contains the bot's replies.
4. The Voice.AI Gateway ends the conversation.

The following shows an example of a conversation flow between the Voice.AI Gateway and a proprietary bot service:



API

This section provides the bot APIs.

Before You Begin

Prior to using this API, please note the following:

- All Voice.AI Gateway requests use HTTP POST request methods.
- All requests and responses contain a JSON body and with the appropriate 'Content-Type: application/json' header.
- All JSON bodies must be encoded with UTF-8.
- Any non-200 response is considered a failure and disconnects the conversation. Failure responses can optionally contain a JSON body with a `reason` attribute.
- All requests have a timeout of 20 seconds. If the timeout expires and no response has been received, the conversation is disconnected.
- The Voice.AI Gateway uses connection reuse (HTTP Connection Keep-Alive). It's recommended that the bot service sets the HTTP Keep-Alive time to at least 30 seconds.
- If a connection error occurs, the Voice.AI Gateway retries the request. Note that the Voice.AI Gateway ignores duplicated activity IDs and therefore, retrying is not expected to cause double handling of the activities.

Configuration

The Voice.AI Gateway should be configured with a `botURL` parameter. The Voice.AI Gateway uses the `botURL` to connect to your bot, for two purposes:

- to verify that the URL is valid and active (using HTTP GET, as described in [Health Check](#) on page 11)
- to create new conversations (using HTTP POST, as described in [Creation of a Conversation](#) below)

For Rasa bots, a typical value for `botURL` has the form: `http://<host>/webhooks/audiocodes/webhook`

Other relevant configuration parameters include:

- `token`: This is used to authenticate the communication with the bot (see [Authentication with Bot](#) on page 12).
- `providerBotName`: This is the value that is sent on the creation of the conversation, to allow one `botURL` to be used for several bots.

Creation of a Conversation

To start a conversation, the Voice.AI Gateway sends a POST request to the `botURL`. The Voice.AI Gateway sends the unique ID of the conversation in the `conversation` attribute.

If several bots share the same URL, the Voice.AI Gateway can be configured to add a `bot` attribute to the request body.

The body of the response from the bot service should contain a set of URLs for performing actions on the newly created conversation. The URLs should be unique to the conversation, by containing a UUID as part of the path - either by using the ID from the `conversation` attribute or a UUID generated by the bot service.



If a URL is relative, the Voice.AI Gateway resolves the URL using the `botURL` parameter as the base URL (according to Section 4 of RFC 1808).

After the conversation is created, the Voice.AI Gateway sends an activity with the `start` event. For more information on the start message, refer to the [Voice.AI Gateway Integration Guide](#).

Request Body Attributes

Parameter	Type	Description
<code>conversation</code>	String	Voice.AI Gateway's conversation ID.
<code>bot</code>	String	(Optional) The value of the <code>providerBotName</code> parameter (if exists).

Response Body Attributes

Parameter	Type	Description
<code>disconnectURL</code>	String	Relative or absolute URL.
<code>refreshURL</code>	String	Relative or absolute URL.
<code>activitiesURL</code>	String	Relative or absolute URL.
<code>expiresSeconds</code>	Number	The value can be from 60 to 3600. The recommended value is 120. For more information on conversation refreshes, see Conversation Refresh on page 9.

Example

The following shows an example of creating a conversation:

■ Request:

```
{
  "conversation": "ad8f59d2-4a72-4f19-ad34-e7e9b1636111"
}
```

■ Response:

```
{
  "activitiesURL": "conversation/ad8f59d2-4a72-4f19-ad34-
e7e9b1636111/activities",
  "refreshURL": "conversation/ad8f59d2-4a72-4f19-ad34-e7e9b1636111/refresh",
  "disconnectURL": "conversation/ad8f59d2-4a72-4f19-ad34-
e7e9b1636111/disconnect",
  "expiresSeconds": 60
}
```

Sending and Receiving Activities

The messages sent between the parties of the conversation are called activities. When the Voice.AI Gateway has activities to send, it sends a POST request to the URL specified in `activitiesURL`. The body of the POST request includes an `activities` attribute containing an array of activities.

The body of the response should also include an `activities` attribute containing an array of activities. If no activities are needed, either the `activities` attribute is omitted or it's sent with an empty array.

If the conversation doesn't exist, the bot service should respond with a 404 Not Found.

The format of the activities is described in the [Voice.AI Gateway Integration Guide](#). In addition, each `activity` must include the following additional attributes:

- `id`: The sender of an activity should generate a UUID (RFC 4122, v4) per activity and send it in the `id` attribute. The receiver of activities should retain a set of all the received activities IDs (in the current conversation) and ignore duplicate activities. This allows the resending of activities in case of failures, without the activities being handled twice.
- `timestamp`: The sender of an activity should add a `timestamp` attribute containing the current time. The format of the timestamp is according to RFC 3339, where the time is in UTC with 3 decimal digits for milliseconds. For example: "2019-04-23T18:25:43.511Z".

The `timestamp` must include the creation time of the activity and must not be modified if the activity is re-sent.

The timestamp is mainly used for logging and debugging.

Request Body Attributes

Parameter	Type	Description
conversation	String	Voice.AI Gateway's conversation ID.
activities	Array of Objects	Array of activities.

Response Body Attributes

Parameter	Type	Description
activities	Array of Objects	Array of activities.

Example

The following shows an example of the `start` activity that is sent by the Voice.AI Gateway when a conversation starts (using `activities` endpoint):

■ Request:

```
{
  "conversation": "ad8f59d2-4a72-4f19-ad34-e7e9b1636111",
  "activities": [
    {
      "id": "ecf2d78d-ef7b-4a5e-907c-53c97cef5f97",
      "timestamp": "2020-01-26T13:03:48.745Z",
      "type": "event",
      "name": "start",
      "parameters": {
        "callee": "1234",
        "calleeHost": "10.20.30.40",
        "caller": "+123456789",
        "callerHost": "10.20.30.40"
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

■ Response:

```
{
  "activities": [
    {
      "id": "15b3d407-5161-41e7-8114-a273859c5f6d",
```

```
"timestamp": "2020-01-26T13:03:48.748Z",
"type": "message",
"text": "Hi there."
}
]
}
```

The following shows an example of `message` activities that correspond to speech utterances:

■ Request (to `activitiesURL`):

```
{
  "conversation": "55b77909-82d8-4355-87f1-68081f4dbb36",
  "activities": [
    {
      "id": "bc44c054-846d-490d-85e9-d3aea96b4f0f",
      "timestamp": "2019-08-20T14:09:12.251Z",
      "type": "message",
      "text": "Hi.",
      "parameters": {
        "confidence": 0.6599681377410889,
        "recognitionOutput": {
          "RecognitionStatus": "Success",
          "Offset": 32300000,
          "Duration": 5800000,
          "NBest": [
            {
              "Confidence": 0.6599681377410889,
              "Lexical": "hi",
              "ITN": "Hi",
              "MaskedITN": "Hi",
              "Display": "Hi."
            },
            {
              "Confidence": 0.3150425851345062,
              "Lexical": "high",
              "ITN": "high",
              "MaskedITN": "high",
              "Display": "high"
            }
          ]
        }
      }
    }
  ]
}
```

```
]
}
```

■ Response:

```
{
  "activities": [
    {
      "id": "dc4eb401-17f2-436f-80fa-b60156b8a804",
      "timestamp": "2020-01-26T13:04:00.885Z",
      "type": "message",
      "text": "How may I assist you?"
    }
  ]
}
```

Conversation Refresh

The Voice.AI Gateway refreshes the conversation by sending a refresh request to the conversation at least 30 seconds before the `expiresSeconds` value expires. The `expiresSeconds` time is activated upon the start of conversation or last refresh. The refresh is done by sending a POST request to the URL specified in `refreshURL`.

The `expiresSeconds` value can be updated by the response body.

If the bot service doesn't receive a refresh request before `expiresSeconds` value expires, it should consider the conversation as terminated (with an error condition).

If the conversation doesn't exist, the bot service should respond with a 404 Not Found.

Request Body Attributes

Parameter	Type	Description
<code>conversation</code>	String	Voice.AI Gateway's conversation ID.

Response Body Attributes

Parameter	Type	Description
<code>expiresSeconds</code>	Number	If the conversation doesn't receive a refresh, it's closed after the time specified by this parameter. The value can be from 60 to 3600. The recommended value is 120.

Example

■ Request:

```
{
  "conversation": "ad8f59d2-4a72-4f19-ad34-e7e9b1636111"
}
```

■ Response:

```
{
  "expiresSeconds": 60
}
```

Ending a Conversation

The conversation may end due to the following reasons:

- The VoIP call has ended (loss of connection with Voice.AI Gateway, or some failure on the SIP side).
- The bot has disconnected (using the `hangup` event, as described in the [Voice.AI Gateway Integration Guide](#)).
- An error has occurred.

For any of the above reasons, the Voice.AI Gateway sends a POST request to the URL specified in `disconnectURL`. The body of the POST request can contain a `reason` attribute. The body of the response should be an empty JSON object. If the conversation doesn't exist, the bot service should respond with a 404 Not Found.



If the conversation expires on the bot service side (i.e., no refresh was done by the Voice.AI Gateway), no explicit message is sent by the Voice.AI Gateway.

Request Body Attributes

Parameter	Type	Description
<code>conversation</code>	String	Voice.AI Gateway's conversation ID.
<code>reason</code>	String	(Optional) The reason for disconnecting the conversation (free text).

Response Body Attributes

The response body is empty.

Example

■ Request:

```
{
  "conversation": "ad8f59d2-4a72-4f19-ad34-e7e9b1636111",
  "reason": "Client Side"
}
```

■ Response:

```
{
}
```

Health Check

To validate the connection with the bot without creating a conversation, the bot side should handle GET requests to the `botURL` URL without creating a conversation (as conversations are created by POST requests). When the Voice.AI Gateway is deployed as a Software as a Service (SaaS) cloud service, it uses this health-check endpoint to verify that the `botURL` and token that were provided are correct. Upon success, the bot replies with a 200 OK containing a JSON body having the attributes listed below.

Request Body Attributes

The request body is empty.

Response Body Attributes

Parameter	Type	Description
<code>type</code>	String	The value is always <code>ac-bot-api</code> .
<code>success</code>	Boolean	The value is always <code>true</code> .

Example

```
{
  "type": "ac-bot-api",
  "success": true
}
```

Security

TLS Usage

It's recommended that the URLs of the bot service use HTTPS.

However, for testing environments, HTTP URLs can be used. In addition, the Voice.AI Gateway can be configured to accept self-signed certificates from the bot service.

Authentication with Bot

It's recommended that the Voice.AI Gateway be configured with the token value that is sent in the 'Authorization: Bearer <token>' header for every HTTP request. This token is used by the bot service to authenticate the Voice.AI Gateway.

For environments that don't require this authentication (e.g., when implementing an alternative authentication method), the token can be left without a value, and no 'Authorization' header will be sent.

3 Text-to-Speech API

A third-party TTS vendor (excluding the commonly used ones such as Azure, AWS, and Google) can integrate with an API that the Voice.AI Gateway exposes as a TTS client. The client (Voice.AI Gateway) sends an HTTP POST request towards a pre-defined URL.

An Authorization header is sent by the client on the HTTP request, containing a shared token. The token can be used by the TTS server to identify the client. Example:

```
Authorization: Bearer <token>
```

Request Body Attributes

Parameter	Type	Description
<code>language</code>	String	Defines the BCP-47 language code for speech recognition of the supplied audio.
<code>format</code>	String	Defines the format of the audio file: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <code>raw</code>: audio without headers ■ <code>wav</code>: audio with WAV headers
<code>encoding</code>	String	Defines the manner in which the audio is stored and transmitted. Currently, only 16-bit linear pulse-code modulation (PCM) encoding (<code>LINEAR16</code>) is supported.
<code>sampleRateHz</code>	Number	Defines the sample rate (in Hertz) of the supplied audio. Currently, only 16,000 Hz is supported.
<code>voice</code>	String	Defines the name of the voice used for speech synthesis.
<code>type</code>	String	Defines the type of text. If it contains SSML, the type is set to <code>ssml</code> .
<code>text</code>	String	Defines the text to synthesize.

Response Body Attributes

In case of a success, the TTS server replies with a 200 OK response, containing a body with the synthesized speech. In case of failure, the server replies with an HTTP error code.

Example

■ Example 1:

```
{
  "language": "en-US",
  "format": "wav",
  "encoding": "LINEAR16",
  "sampleRateHz": 16000,
  "voice": "SomeVoiceName",
  "text": "Text to be played"
}
```

■ Example 2:

```
{
  "language": "en-US",
  "format": "wav",
  "encoding": "LINEAR16",
  "sampleRateHz": 16000,
  "voice": "SomeVoiceName",
  "type": "ssml",
  "text": "<say-as interpret-as='ordinal'>1</say-as></speak>"
}
```

4 Speech-to-Text API

The API is based on WebSocket. The client (Voice.AI Gateway) opens a WebSocket connection towards a pre-defined URL, for each conversation. The connection remains open for the whole duration of the conversation. The same connection can be used for several sequential (not concurrent) recognition-sessions on which the STT engine performs recognition of an audio stream. Note that the connection might remain open on periods on which there is no active recognition-session.

Control messages are sent as textual JSON messages. Media is sent as binary frames (per Section 5.6 of RFC 6455). As there is no “session” information on the binary frames, a single WebSocket connection can only be used for one concurrent recognition-session.

Control Messages Sent by Client (Voice.AI Gateway)

- `start` – start a recognition-session.

Example:

```
{
  "type": "start",
  "language": "en-US",
  "format": "raw",
  "encoding": "LINEAR16",
  "sampleRateHz": 16000,
}
```

Parameters:

- `language`: a BCP-47 language code for speech recognition of the supplied audio.
- `format`: the format of the audio file:
 - ◆ `raw`: audio without headers
 - ◆ `wav`: audio with WAV headers
- `encoding`: how the audio is stored and transmitted. Currently, only 16-bit linear pulse-code modulation (PCM) encoding (`LINEAR16`) is supported.
- `sampleRateHz`: the sample rate (in Hertz) of the supplied audio. Currently, only 16,000 Hz is supported.

Additionally, if the STT engine supports a “context” for the recognition (e.g., custom vocabulary), a parameter can be sent by the client to indicate the context.

- `stop` – stop the current recognition session.



“stop” can only be sent for a “started” recognition-session.

Example:

```
{
  "type": "stop",
}
```

Control Messages Sent by Server (STT)

- `started` – sent to indicate that the recognition-session has started and that the stream (binary messages) can be sent by the client.

Example:

```
{
  "type": "started"
}
```

- `hypothesis` – sent for partial recognition.

Example:

```
{
  "type": "hypothesis",
  "alternatives": [
    {
      "text": "Hi"
    }
  ]
}
```

- `recognition` – sent for each utterance that is recognized by the STT.



Several "recognition" messages can be sent for a single recognition-session.

Example:

```
{
  "type": "recognition",
  "alternatives": [
    {
      "text": "Hi there",
      "confidence": 0.8355
    }
  ]
}
```

- `end` – Sent to indicate that the current recognition-session has ended.



- In case only a single utterance is recognized per recognition-session, an "end" message must be sent immediately after the "recognition" message.
- The "end" message must be sent after the server has received a "stop" message, to indicate that the recognition-session has ended.

Example:

```
{
  "type": "end",
  "reason": "some reason"
}
```

- `error` – indicates that the current recognition-session has ended with a failure condition.



- The same WebSocket can be used to start additional recognition sessions.
- In case of an error that prevents the server from further handling messages on the WebSocket connection, the server must close the connection.

Example:

```
{
  "type": "error",
  "reason": "some error"
}
```

Binary Messages Sent by Client

The client sends the audio stream as WebSocket binary messages, according to the encoding and sample-rate indicated in the `start` message.

Authentication

An Authorization header is sent by the client on the HTTP request that creates the WebSocket connection, containing a shared token. The token can be used by the server to identify the client. For example:

```
Authorization: Bearer <token>
```

Example Flow

Direction	Message
Client > Server	<pre data-bbox="799 264 1377 600"> { "type": "start", "language": "en-US", "format": "raw", "encoding": "LINEAR16", "sampleRateHz": 16000 }</pre>
Server > Client	<pre data-bbox="799 633 1377 815"> { "type": "started" }</pre>
Client > Server	<binary messages>
Server > Client	<pre data-bbox="799 920 1377 1292"> { "type": "hypothesis", "alternatives": [{ "text": "Hi" }] }</pre>
Server > Client	<pre data-bbox="799 1328 1377 1744"> { "type": "recognition", "alternatives": [{ "text": "Hi there.", "confidence": 0.8355 }] }</pre>
Server > Client	<pre data-bbox="799 1780 1377 1939"> { "type": "hypothesis", "alternatives": [</pre>

Direction	Message
	<pre data-bbox="799 264 1378 528"> { "text": "My name" }] }</pre>
Server > Client	<pre data-bbox="799 555 1378 976"> { "type": "recognition", "alternatives": [{ "text": "My name is John.", "confidence": 0.83 }] }</pre>
Client > Server	<pre data-bbox="799 1003 1378 1189"> { "type": "stop" }</pre>
Server > Client	<pre data-bbox="799 1216 1378 1440"> { "type": "end", "reason": "stop by client" }</pre>
	<new recognition-session; same connection>
Client > Server	<pre data-bbox="799 1541 1378 1877"> { "type": "start", "language": "en-US", "format": "raw", "encoding": "LINEAR16", "sampleRateHz": 16000 }</pre>

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