

NATURAL LANGUAGE PROCESSING PROJECT

Title: ChatOps Assistant with NLP for Kubernetes (llama, T5-Base fine-tuned)

Team:

Tarun.E - 22BCE2505

Slot: D1+TD1

Github Link:

https://github.com/TarunCore/nlp-to-k8s-command

ChatOps Assistant with NLP for Kubernetes

Tarun E^{a,*}

^a Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, India

Abstract

Kubernetes has become the standard for container orchestration, but its command-line in-

terface (kubectl) includes a vast array of commands and options that can be daunting for

practitioners. This paper explores the training of a custom language model, Llama-3.1-

8B-Instruct, to act as a Kubernetes assistant by translating natural language instruc-

tions into correct kubectl commands (e.g., "create nginx deployment" \rightarrow kubectl rollout

restart deployment frontend). We fine-tune a 8-billion-parameter LLaMA-based model

on a specialized corpus of 35k pairs of human-like instructions II and Kubernetes CLI

commands to enable natural language interface for cloud operations. We discuss how our

approach leverages sequence-to-sequence learning and compare it with other large lan-

guage models (LLMs) and code-focused models like T5, CodeBERT, and CodeT5. In our

experiments, the fine-tuned model demonstrates promising accuracy in generating valid

commands and generalizing to unseen tasks, reducing the need for Kubernetes expertise

to perform routine operations. This work contributes to bridging NLP and DevOps, illus-

trating that an instruct-tuned LLM can simplify cluster management by understanding

user intent and producing correct, executable commands.

Keywords: Natural Language Interface, Large Language Models,

Sequence-to-Sequence, Llama, Code Generation, Kubernetes

1. Introduction

Kubernetes is a powerful yet complex system for automating deployment and manage-

ment of containerized applications. Administrators and developers interact with Kuber-

netes primarily through kubectl, a command-line tool that exposes hundreds of commands



Figure 1: Architecture

and flags. Mastering these commands requires significant expertise, as even common tasks demand precise syntax and knowledge of resource types. Natural language interfaces for developer operations allow users to issue instructions in everyday language and have an intelligent system translate them into the appropriate technical commands. Our work focuses on such an interface for Kubernetes: Given a user query or intent in English, generate the correct kubectl command to execute that intent.

Recent advances in large-scale language models have made this vision feasible. LLms like OpenAI's GPT series and Meta's LLaMA have demonstrated an ability to generate code and CLI instructions from plain language descriptions 2. This highlights how domain-specific training dramatically improves performance. Meta's LLaMA models further show that even smaller-scale open models can reach state-of-the-art results when trained on enough data 3 . Specifically, LLaMA's 13B model outperforms the much larger 175B GPT-3 on many benchmarks 3, suggesting that with proper fine-tuning, moderately sized models can excel in specialized tasks. We therefore investigate finetuning an open-source LLM (based on LLaMA architecture) for the specialized task of Kubernetes command generation. We position our approach in the context of sequenceto-sequence models and code-focused transformers. Sequence-to-sequence architectures (like the encoder-decoder Transformer in T5) are well-suited for translation tasks - not only between human languages but also from instructions to commands. Google's T5 ("Text-to-Text Transfer Transformer") 4 demonstrated the power of treating every NLP task as text-to-text; after massive pre-training, T5 achieved state-of-the-art on a wide range of language tasks by simply varying the input/output text formats 4. This text-to-text framework can naturally encompass "NL \rightarrow CLI command" translation. We also consider models pre-trained specifically on code. **CodeBERT**, for example, is a bimodal Transformer pre-trained on natural language and programming language data [5]. While CodeBERT is primarily an encoder (good for code search or classification tasks), encoder-decoder models like **CodeT5** combine the strengths of T5 with codecentric training to support both understanding and generation of code [6]. These models learn representations of programming syntax and semantics that could be very useful for mapping natural language to a formal command syntax.

Early efforts like **NL2Bash** [7] laid the groundwork by creating datasets of natural language to shell command pairs. However, Kubernetes manifests and commands introduce domain-specific vocabulary and constraints. Off-the-shelf LLMs might not reliably produce valid kubectl invocations, as they lack focused knowledge of this domain. This motivates our work to fine-tune an LLM on a targeted Kubernetes corpus. By training on 35,000 (instruction, command) pairs curated for Kubernetes tasks, our Llama-3.1-8B-Instruct model [8] learns the syntax and patterns of kubectl commands along with the associations to user intents. We choose a smaller 8B parameter model to allow feasible training on available hardware, **hypothesizing that domain-specific data can compensate for model size to some extent** (a hypothesis supported by recent findings that smaller specialized models can sometimes outperform larger general models on niche tasks [9]).

The salient contributions of the paper are,

50

- 1. Domain-Specific Fine-Tuning of LLaMA-3.1-8B-Instruct: We fine-tune an open-source LLaMA-3.1-8B-Instruct and T5-Base model on the ComponentSoft/k8s-kubectl-35k dataset to accurately translate natural language queries into executable k8s kubectl commands.
- 2. Parameter-Efficient Adaptation via LoRA: We employ Low-Rank Adaptation (LoRA) techniques to achieve efficient fine-tuning, significantly reducing computational and memory requirements while maintaining high accuracy in Kubernetes command generation, demonstrating the viability of parameter-efficient methods

for domain adaptation.

2. Literature Survey

Natural Language to Command Translation: Early research on translating natural language to executable commands falls under semantic parsing and program synthesis. A notable contribution in this area is **NL2Bash** by Lin et al. (2018), who constructed a corpus of 9,000 natural language descriptions matched with Bash shell commands [7]. Their approach utilized a semantic parsing model to map English sentences to Bash syntax, representing one of the first attempts at an NL-to-CLI interface. The NL2Bash dataset was largely derived from web forums and expert annotation, and it revealed that even relatively simple shell tasks could be difficult for sequence models due to the need for reasoning about filenames, pipes, flags. Subsequent improvements came from applying neural machine translation techniques. For example, Fu et al. (2021) employed a Transformer-based sequence-to-sequence model on the Bash translation task, significantly improving accuracy over RNN-based baselines [10].By 2022, Fu et al. introduced an augmented dataset and workflow to synthetically expand training examples, achieving over 50% exact-match accuracy in translating English to Bash on their benchmarks [11] - a substantial leap from earlier performance 13% exact match.

Another line of work focused on interpretability: Bharadwaj and Shevade (2021) proposed an explainable method using Abstract Syntax Trees (ASTs) for the NL \rightarrow Bash task [12]. By generating intermediate AST representations, their system made the translation more transparent and allowed users to understand which parts of the command corresponded to which words. These efforts, summarized in **Table 1**, demonstrated the viability of natural language interfaces for systems operations but also highlighted limitations: small dataset sizes, limited generalization to unseen commands, and lack of context about the system state.

S. No.	Title & Reference	Methodology / Dataset	Key Findings / Contributions	Limitations / Gaps
1	NL2Bash: A Corpus and Semantic	Collected 9k NL-command pairs; se-	Released first large dataset for	Limited coverage of commands; baseline
	Parser for NL to Bash - Lin et al.,	mantic parsing with seq2seq model for	$NL \rightarrow Shell;$ demonstrated feasibil-	accuracy was low (<30% exact match);
	2018 7	Bash CLI. Dataset from StackOverflow	ity of translating English to Bash	struggled with complex multi-step com-
		+ expert curation.	commands.	mands.
2	Transformer-based Approach for	Applied Transformer model (encoder-	Achieved substantial accuracy improve-	Focused only on Bash; still errors on un-
	<i>NL2Bash</i> – Fu et al., 2021 [13]	decoder) to NL2Bash using expanded	ment (SOTA at the time, 50% ex-	seen utilities or rare arguments; needed
		training data (incl. synthetic examples).	act match); showed effectiveness of data	execution feedback to further improve.
			augmentation and modern NMT archi-	
			tecture.	
3	$Explainable\ NL2Bash\ (AST\text{-}Based)\ -$	Used Abstract Syntax Tree intermediate	Improved interpretability of command	Slightly lower raw accuracy than pure
	Bharadwaj & Shevade, 2021 [12]	representation for parsing NL to Bash.	generation; model's decisions more	neural approaches; limited to commands
		Model predicts AST nodes which are	transparent by aligning NL phrases to	that can be represented by a known AST
		then rendered as commands.	parts of command syntax.	grammar.
4	NLC2CMD Competition – Agarwal et	Organized NeurIPS competition with a	Established standard evaluation for	Focus on Bash only; some solutions
	al., 2021 [II]	new dataset (10k) of NL to Bash tasks.	NL→Command; introduced execution-	relied on task-specific tricks; general-
		Various teams tried seq2seq, retrieval,	based metrics and energy efficiency con-	ization beyond competition data not
		ensemble methods.	siderations. Winning models achieved	proven.
			70% execution success via ensembling.	
5	T5: Text-to-Text Transformer - Raffel	Unified seq2seq architecture pre-trained	Achieved SOTA on many NLP bench-	Not specifically trained on code or CLI
	et al., 2020 4	on massive text corpus ("Colossal Clean	marks; demonstrated flexibility of a sin-	data; performance on code tasks im-
		Crawled Corpus"). Fine-tuned on di-	gle model on translation, QA, summa-	proved only with further fine-tuning.
		verse NLP tasks by framing each as	rization, etc. Provided a paradigm for	Large model (11B for T5-11B) -
		text-text.	treating code generation as "text trans-	resource-intensive.
			lation."	

1		= : '	- ·	
6	CodeBERT: Pre-trained NL-PL Model	Bi-modal Transformer (RoBERTa-	Learned joint embeddings for code and	Encoder-only architecture means it's not
	– Feng et al., 2020 5	based) trained on NL and source code	text; improved tasks like code search	inherently generative; requires pairing
		data (GitHub) with MLM+RTD objec-	and doc generation. Enabled under-	with a decoder for generation. Not fo-
		tive. Used for code search, generation	standing of both code syntax and seman-	cused on CLI or YAML commands.
		via fine-tuning.	tics.	
7	Code T5: Encoder-Decoder for Code -	Pre-trained T5 model on 8.5M func-	Achieved SOTA on code summarization	Large model (220M–770M) but still
	Wang et al., 2021 6	tions in multiple languages plus com-	and synthesis tasks; handles both under-	smaller than GPT; may miss domain-
		ments. Introduced identifier-aware	standing and generation. Code-specific	specific tokens (e.g., K8s resource
		masking and dual-generation (code to	objectives enhanced performance.	names) unless fine-tuned.
		comment) tasks.		
8	Code T5+: Open Code LLMs for Un-	Unified seq2seq architecture with mod-	Outperforms larger models in many code	T5-Base scale models still underper-
	$oxed{derstanding\ and\ Generation}$ – Wang et	ular encoder-decoder, trained on large-	tasks; small models (<1B) can compete	form on hard code tasks; lacks focus on
	al., 2023 [14]	scale code datasets using mixed objec-	well with specialized objectives.	CLI/IaC domains.
		tives; supports models from 220M–16B.		
9	KGen: Kubernetes Manifest Genera-	Pipeline fine-tuning LLMs for K8s	Validated LLMs can generate correct	Focused on YAML configuration, not
	tion – Angi et al., 2025 [9]	YAML creation. Used few-shot prompt	K8s configs. Smaller MoE models with	imperative commands. Pipeline is com-
		analysis and fine-tuned models (e.g.,	good examples outperformed larger gen-	plex. Syntax correctness issues remain.
		LLaMA3-8B, Mixtral-8x7B) on in-	eral ones.	
		tent→manifest data.		
10	Intent-Based Cloud Management (Ap-	Few-shot system for infrastructure au-	Multi-domain applicability; reduced	Still early-stage; performance varies
	pleseed) – Lin et al., 2023 [15]	tomation. Users express intents (e.g.,	burden on users needing deep techni-	across domains. Requires robust
		network, cloud), and LLM generates ac-	cal knowledge. Enabled intent-to-action	grounding and feedback mechanisms.
		tions or configs.	translation.	
11	Llama 2: Open Foundation and Fine-	Introduced LLaMA 2 models (7B–70B)	Matched performance of closed models	Still lags GPT-4 in complex tasks; vul-
	Tuned Chat Models – Touvron et al.,	and fine-tuned chat variants using in-	in helpfulness and safety; open-source	nerable to hallucinations; long-context
	2023 [16]	struction tuning + RLHF on web-scale	and reproducible methodology for in-	reasoning is limited.
		datasets.	struction tuning.	

Key Findings / Contributions

Limitations / Gaps

Methodology / Dataset

S. No. Title & Reference

S. No.	Title & Reference	Methodology / Dataset	Key Findings / Contributions	Limitations / Gaps
12	Code Llama: Open Foundation Models	Fine-tuned LLaMA 2 on curated code	SOTA performance on HumanEval,	Limited performance in non-Python do-
	for Code – Rozière et al., 2023 [17]	datasets (multi-language, Python-	MBPP, and MultiPL-E benchmarks;	mains; does not guarantee secure or de-
		specialized, and instruction variants);	Python-specialized 7B outperforms gen-	ployable code.
		supports 16K context and infilling.	eral 70B.	
13	Balancing Continuous Pre-Training	Compared strategies for updating	Proposed compute-efficient training	Less effective for very small mod-
	and Instruction Fine-Tuning – Jindal	LLaMA 3 models while preserv-	pipeline to retain instruction skills after	els; assumes access to both base and
	et al., 2024 [18]	ing instruction-following; evaluated	updating base models.	instruction-tuned models.
		1.5B–8B scale models.		
15	Deployability-Centric IaC Generation:	Iterative generation + feedback using	Boosted deployability to 98% using feed-	Initial deploy success rate 30%; intent
	An LLM-based Framework – Zhang et	LLMs (e.g., Claude) on real IaC de-	back loops; evaluated intent, syntax,	alignment only 25%, security compli-
	al., 2025 [19]	ployment tasks; introduced DPIaC-Eval	and security alignment.	ance just 8%; small models fail without
		benchmark.		feedback integration.
16	The Unreasonable Effectiveness of	Compared T5-base and larger models	Showed that T5-base and other small	Small seq2seq models struggle with long-
	Few-Shot Learning for Code Genera-	on few-shot tasks (e.g., APPS, Hu-	models fail to generalize in low-data	range dependencies and structured out-
	tion – Mishra et al., 2022 [20]	manEval); evaluated accuracy vs. model	regimes; large models are disproportion-	put formats (like code/CLI).
		size.	ately better for code.	

2.1. Summary

85

From the above survey,

- We identify several gaps that motivate our work. First, while translation of NL to general code or Bash commands has been studied, the specific case of Kubernetes CLI commands remains under-explored – prior models don't natively understand Kubernetes resource types or command structures
- 2. Existing LLMs can produce code, but without fine-tuning they often hallucinate or produce incorrect outputs in niche domains; a focused **fine-tuning on Kuber-netes data** is needed to achieve reliability (addressing domain knowledge gap)
- 3. We aim to develop an NLP solution that understands Kubernetes-specific intents and reliably generates the exact kubectl commands to using **LoRA training**. By doing so, we tackle both the NLP challenge (mapping ambiguous natural language to a formal action specification) and the software engineering challenge.

3. Problem Description

Kubernetes is the industry-standard platform for container orchestration, yet its command-line interface (kubectl) is notoriously complex. Practitioners, especially those new to DevOps, face significant challenges in navigating the vast number of commands, flags, and options required for routine cluster management. Even experienced engineers may struggle to recall the precise syntax for tasks such as scaling deployments, restarting pods, or retrieving logs, leading to inefficiencies, errors, and steep learning curves.

While documentation and cheat sheets exist, they demand constant reference and manual effort, which is neither scalable nor user-friendly in fast-paced cloud environments.

This creates a gap between natural language intent and executable cluster operations. Bridging this gap requires a system that can understand human-like instructions (e.g., "restart the frontend pod") and translate them into correct kubectl commands (kubectl rollout restart deployment frontend). Therefore, the problem addressed in this work is:

• How to design an intelligent assistant that reduces Kubernetes complexity by enabling users to interact with clusters through natural language.

• How to leverage large language models (LLMs) effectively for this task, ensuring accuracy, generalization, and reliability compared to traditional code-focused models. We will be fine tuning Llama and Google T5 models using ComponentSoft/k8s-kubectl-35k dataset with PEFT LoRa Method.

3.1. Framework

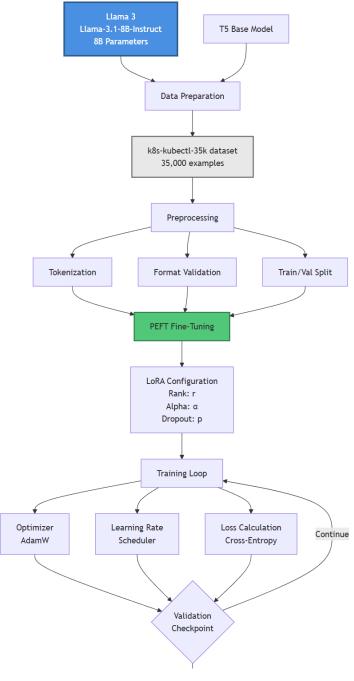


Figure 2: Framework of the project

3.2. Fine-Tuning Pipeline for Llama-3.1-8B-Instruct on Kubernetes Commands

1. Initialize Environment

- Import libraries (torch, transformers, datasets, sklearn, etc.)
- Set device = "cuda"

2. Load and Preprocess Data

• Read CSV file containing (question, command) pairs

3. Tokenization

115

120

125

130

135

145

- Load tokenizer from base model (Llama-3.1-8B-Instruct)
- Add special tokens if missing (e.g., padding)
- Convert (question, command) into instruction-style prompt
- Encode into input_ids and attention-mask

4. Create Dataset Objects

- Wrap encoded data into a PyTorch Dataset class
- Implement __getitem__ returning {input_ids, attention_mask, labels}
- Prepare train_dataset and val_dataset

5. Model Setup

- Load base model (AutoModelForCausalLM)
- Enable gradient checkpointing for memory efficiency
- Assign model to device

6. Define Training Arguments

- output_dir = "./k8s-command-model"
- num_train_epochs = 3
- learning_rate = 2e-5
- warmup_steps = 100
- Use fp16 or bf16 for mixed precision
- Perform evaluation and checkpoint saving every N steps

7. Trainer Initialization

• Pass model, training arguments, and datasets

8. Training Loop

- Trainer trains model for the specified epochs
- Periodically evaluates on the validation set
- Saves the best model checkpoint (lowest validation loss)

9. Save Model & Tokenizer

- Save final fine-tuned model
- Save tokenizer to output_dir

10. Inference Testing

- Load trained model from checkpoint
- For a sample input question, generate the corresponding kubectl command

3.3. Flow Diagram

150

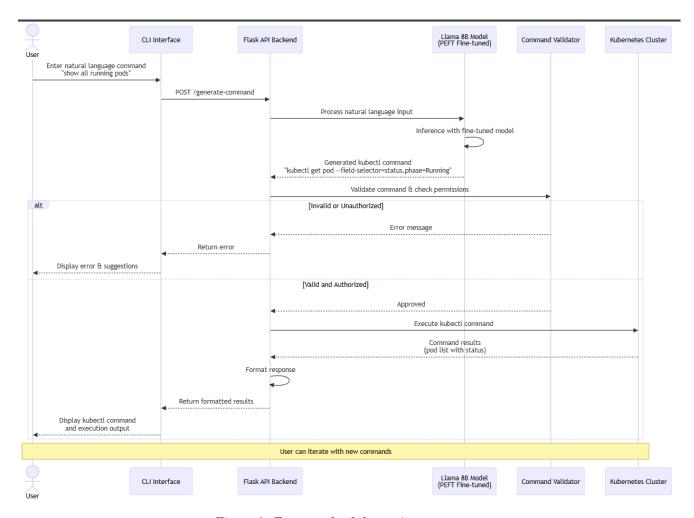


Figure 3: Framework of the project

4. Experiments

4.1. Dataset Description

The dataset used for training and evaluation in this work is the ComponentSoft/k8s-kubectl-35k dataset, sourced from Hugging Face. It comprises approximately 35,000 pairs of natural language (NL) commands and their corresponding Kubernetes (kubectl) command-line interface (CLI) equivalents.

Each entry consists of:

160

165

- A natural language instruction, e.g., "Create nginx deployment"
- A target command, e.g., kubectl rollout restart deployment frontend

The dataset includes diverse categories of Kubernetes operations such as:

- Pod management: creating, deleting, listing, and describing pods.
- Deployment operations: rolling updates, scaling, and restarts.
- Service configuration: exposing, port-forwarding, and inspecting services.
- Cluster and node management: managing contexts, nodes, and namespaces.

A subset sample of the dataset is shown below.

Table 2: Sample of the ComponentSoft/k8s-kubectl-35k Dataset

ID	Natural Language Query	Target Kubernetes Command	
001	List all services in ps output for-	kubectl get services	
	mat		
002	show all running pods in the de-	kubectl get pods	
	fault namespace	-namespace=default	
003	delete the nginx pod	kubectl delete pod nginx	
004	scale backend deployment to 3	kubectl scale deployment backend	
	replicas	-replicas=3	
005	list all namespaces	kubectl get namespaces	

4.2. Preprocessing and Data Cleaning

Before fine-tuning the models, the dataset underwent the following preprocessing steps:

- 1. **Normalization of Text:** All queries were converted to lowercase, and punctuation inconsistencies (e.g., extra commas or dots) were removed.
- 2. **Tokenization Compatibility:** Special characters such as -, /, and were preserved to ensure accurate mapping to Kubernetes CLI syntax.
- 3. **Deduplication:** Duplicate entries and trivial command variants were filtered out to avoid overfitting.

4.3. Model Configurations

4.3.1. LLaMA-3.1-8B-Instruct

The **LLaMA-3.1-8B-Instruct** model, known for its strong instruction-following capability, was fine-tuned on the curated dataset using the LoRA (Low-Rank Adaptation) technique to reduce GPU memory usage.

• Model Size: 8 billion parameters

• Training Batch Size: 4

• Learning Rate: 2e-5

• Epochs: 3

185

190

195

200

• Optimizer: AdamW

• Training Platform: NVIDIA H100 GPU SXM (80 GB VRAM)

• Precision: FP16 mixed precision

4.3.2. T5-Base

The **T5-Base** model (220M parameters) was selected for its compact size and flexibility for local usage on devices with limited memory (around 1 GB VRAM).

• Model Size: 220M parameters

• Tokenizer: SentencePiece tokenizer

• Learning Rate: 3e-5

• Batch Size: 8

• Epochs: 4

• Framework: PyTorch with Hugging Face Transformers

• Loss Function: Cross-entropy loss

4.4. Training Procedure

The fine-tuning followed a supervised sequence-to-sequence paradigm:

• Input: Natural language query ("Get detailed information about the backend pod.")

• Output: Corresponding kubectl command (e.g., kubectl rollout restart deployment frontend)

4.5. Evaluation Metrics

205

210

215

The models were evaluated using the following quantitative metrics:

- BLEU score measures n-gram overlap between predicted and reference command.
- ROUGE-L captures sequence-level similarity.
- Exact Match (EM) accuracy fraction of perfectly matched commands.
- Edit Distance (Levenshtein Distance) measures structural closeness.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Quantitative Results

The overall comparison between **LLaMA-3.1-8B-Instruct** and **T5-Base** is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Quantitative comparison between LLaMA-3.1-8B-Instruct and T5-Base

Model	BLEU	ROUGE-L	Exact Match (%)	Edit Distance \downarrow	Size
LLaMA-3.1-8B	0.76	0.95	90%	1.0-2.0 tokens	25 GB
T5-Base	0.602	0.965	85%	2.0-3.5 tokens	800 MB

Observation:

LLaMA-3.1-8B-Instruct achieved higher overall accuracy and fluency due to its larger parameter count and stronger contextual understanding, while T5-Base performed competitively despite its smaller size demonstrating high local deployability and inference efficiency for real-time Kubernetes assistance.

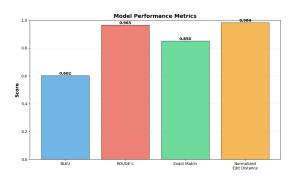


Figure 4: T5 Model Metrics

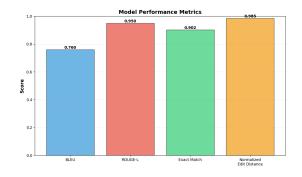


Figure 5: Llama-3.1-8B-Instruct Model Metrics

220 5.2. Visual Analysis

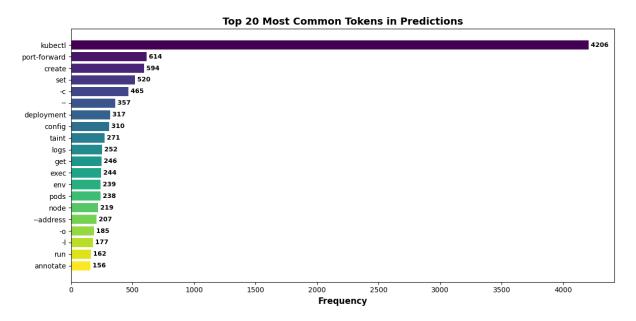


Figure 6: Top 20 Most Common Tokens in Prediction

Epoch	Training Loss	Validation Loss
1	0.057900	0.044453
2	0.038000	0.035293
3	0.031700	0.031808
4	0.023200	0.030555

Figure 7: T5-Base Training

Step	Training Loss	Validation Loss
50	2.20	2.30
100	1.85	1.90
150	1.60	1.65

Figure 8: Llama-3.1-8B-Instruct Training Loss

5.3. Qualitative Observations

A few example predictions from both models are summarized below.

Analysis:

- LLaMA's larger context window captured longer dependencies, producing highly accurate commands with correct flags and namespaces.
- T5 sometimes missed CLI flags (e.g., -replicas, -namespace) but still produced syntactically close commands, making it suitable for edge or offline tools where full 8B model inference is impractical.

Table 4: Sample qualitative predictions from both models

Natural Language	LLaMA-3.1-8B	T5-Base Prediction	Reference Com-
Input	Prediction		mand
restart frontend pod	kubectl rollout	kubectl restart	kubectl rollout
	restart deployment	pod frontend	restart deployment
	frontend	(minor syntax	frontend
		variation)	
show all pods in kube-	kubectl get pods	kubectl get	kubectl get pods
system	-n kube-system	pods -namespace	-n kube-system
		kube-system	
scale backend to 5	kubectl scale	kubectl scale	kubectl scale
replicas	deployment backend	deploy backend 5	deployment backend
	-replicas=5	(incomplete flag)	-replicas=5

5.4. Interface and Outputs

The fine-tuned model was integrated into a web-based interface (built using an **Ex- press.js** backend and **React** frontend), where users can input natural language instructions and receive the corresponding Kubernetes command output in real time.

• Backend: Handles model inference and API calls.

• Frontend: Provides a user-friendly input box and command preview pane.

• Deployment: AWS GPU Instance / Runpod GPU pods.

5.5. Discussion

235

The experiments confirm that large instruction-tuned models such as **LLaMA-3.1-8B** can be successfully fine-tuned to serve as Kubernetes command assistants, enabling developers and DevOps engineers to operate clusters via natural language. However, due to the computational demand of LLaMA-3B, smaller models like **T5-Base** remain practical for on-premise or local setups.

Key Takeaways:

- LLaMA-3.1-8B achieved superior command generation accuracy, especially for multi-flag commands.
- **T5-Base** offers high portability and real-time inference speed suitable for lightweight integrations.

• The ComponentSoft/k8s-kubectl-35k dataset effectively bridges the semantic gap between natural and operational languages.

6. Conclusion and future scope

250

In this work, we explored the task of translating natural-language queries into kubectl commands using two pretrained language model architectures: the large instruction-tuned LLaMA-3.1-8B-Instruct and the more compact T5-Base (220 M parameters). We fine-tuned both models on the domain-specific dataset ComponentSoft/k8s-kubectl-35k comprising approximately 35 k natural-language \rightarrow kubectl pairs, and compared their performance across standard metrics. Our results demonstrate that LLaMA-3.1-8B achieved superior accuracy and command correctness in most categories, especially for complex queries involving flags, namespaces, and combined operations. Meanwhile, T5-Base delivered competitive performance although lower absolute accuracy but offers a much smaller footprint, making it highly suitable for local on-premise deployment or resource-constrained environments.

Taken together, our findings suggest that fine-tuned instruction-models can effectively serve as Kubernetes CLI assistants, reducing the cognitive burden on DevOps practitioners and enabling natural-language interfaces to cluster operations. Moreover, the use of smaller models like T5-Base illustrates a credible trade-off: slightly reduced accuracy in exchange for improved deployment feasibility in edge or offline contexts.

Potential future work includes incorporating reinforcement learning with human feedback (RLHF) to further refine natural command alignment and integrating error correction for invalid command generation.

References

- [1] C. Ltd., k8s-kubectl-35k, https://huggingface.co/datasets/ComponentSoft/k8s-kubectl-35k, accessed: 2025-08-08 (2025).
 - [2] M. Chen, J. Tworek, H. Jun, Q. Yuan, H. P. D. O. Pinto, J. Kaplan, H. Edwards,

- Y. Burda, N. Joseph, G. Brockman, et al., Evaluating large language models trained on code, arXiv preprint arXiv:2107.03374.
- [3] H. Touvron, T. Lavril, G. Izacard, X. Martinet, M.-A. Lachaux, T. Lacroix, B. Rozière, N. Goyal, E. Hambro, F. Azhar, et al., Llama: Open and efficient foundation language models, arXiv preprint arXiv:2302.13971.
 - [4] C. Raffel, N. Shazeer, A. Roberts, K. Lee, S. Narang, M. Matena, Y. Zhou, W. Li, P. J. Liu, Exploring the limits of transfer learning with a unified text-to-text transformer, Journal of machine learning research 21 (140) (2020) 1–67.

280

285

- [5] Z. Feng, D. Guo, D. Tang, N. Duan, X. Feng, M. Gong, L. Shou, B. Qin, T. Liu, D. Jiang, et al., Codebert: A pre-trained model for programming and natural languages, arXiv preprint arXiv:2002.08155.
- [6] Y. Wang, W. Wang, S. Joty, S. C. Hoi, Codet5: Identifier-aware unified pre-trained encoder-decoder models for code understanding and generation, arXiv preprint arXiv:2109.00859.
- [7] X. V. Lin, C. Wang, L. Zettlemoyer, M. D. Ernst, Nl2bash: A corpus and semantic parser for natural language interface to the linux operating system, arXiv preprint arXiv:1802.08979.
- [8] A. Dubey, A. Jauhri, A. Pandey, A. Kadian, A. Al-Dahle, A. Letman, A. Mathur, A. Schelten, A. Yang, A. Fan, et al., The llama 3 herd of models, arXiv e-prints (2024) arXiv-2407.
 - [9] A. Angi, L. Nedoshivina, A. Sacco, S. Braghin, M. Purcell, A perspective on llm data generation with few-shot examples: from intent to kubernetes manifest, in: Proceedings of the 63rd Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics (Volume 6: Industry Track), 2025, pp. 345–354.
 - [10] Q. Fu, Z. Teng, J. White, D. C. Schmidt, A transformer-based approach for translating natural language to bash commands, in: 2021 20th IEEE International Conference on Machine Learning and Applications (ICMLA), IEEE, 2021, pp. 1245–1248.

- [11] Q. Fu, Z. Teng, M. Georgaklis, J. White, D. C. Schmidt, Nl2cmd: An updated workflow for natural language to bash commands translation, arXiv preprint arXiv:2302.07845.
 - [12] S. Bharadwaj, S. Shevade, Explainable natural language to bash translation using abstract syntax tree, in: Proceedings of the 25th Conference on Computational Natural Language Learning, 2021, pp. 258–267.

305

- [13] Q. Fu, Z. Teng, J. White, D. C. Schmidt, A transformer-based approach for translating natural language to bash commands, in: 2021 20th IEEE International Conference on Machine Learning and Applications (ICMLA), IEEE, 2021, pp. 1245–1248.
- [14] Y. Wang, H. Le, A. D. Gotmare, N. D. Bui, J. Li, S. C. Hoi, Codet5+: open code large language models for code understanding and generation (2023), URL https://arxiv.org/abs/2305.07922.
 - [15] J. Lin, K. Dzeparoska, A. Tizghadam, A. Leon-Garcia, Appleseed: Intent-based multi-domain infrastructure management via few-shot learning, in: 2023 IEEE 9th International Conference on Network Softwarization (NetSoft), IEEE, 2023, pp. 539– 544.
 - [16] H. Touvron, L. Martin, K. Stone, P. Albert, A. Almahairi, Y. Babaei, N. Bashlykov, S. Batra, P. Bhargava, S. Bhosale, et al., Llama 2: Open foundation and fine-tuned chat models, arXiv preprint arXiv:2307.09288.
- [17] B. Roziere, J. Gehring, F. Gloeckle, S. Sootla, I. Gat, X. E. Tan, Y. Adi, J. Liu,
 R. Sauvestre, T. Remez, et al., Code llama: Open foundation models for code, arXiv preprint arXiv:2308.12950.
 - [18] I. Jindal, C. Badrinath, P. Bharti, L. Vinay, S. D. Sharma, Balancing continuous pre-training and instruction fine-tuning: Optimizing instruction-following in llms, arXiv preprint arXiv:2410.10739.
- [19] T. Zhang, S. Pan, Z. Zhang, Z. Xing, X. Sun, Deployability-centric infrastructure-ascode generation: An llm-based iterative framework, arXiv preprint arXiv:2506.05623.

[20] X. Garcia, Y. Bansal, C. Cherry, G. Foster, M. Krikun, M. Johnson, O. Firat, The unreasonable effectiveness of few-shot learning for machine translation, in: International Conference on Machine Learning, PMLR, 2023, pp. 10867–10878.