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Abstract— [1] Accurate application classification is important and useful to improve network performance. However, with the continuous expansion of network scale and the rapid increase of network users, it is very difficult for the existing application classification methods to accurately identify and classify network applications. Currently, most classification methods are suitable for small-scale data sets and cannot achieve high classification accuracy because of the shallow learn- ing structure and the limited learning ability. The emergence of deep learning technology and software-defined networking (SDN) enables the application classification method to process large-scale data. In this paper, by leveraging the SDN architecture, we present a novel hybrid deep neural network–based application classification method, which achieves high classification accuracy without the manual feature selection and extraction. In the proposed applica- tion classification framework, by taking the advantage of the logical centralized control and powerful computing capability, the massive network traffic is eas- ily collected and processed by the SDN controller. The processed data is used to train the hybrid deep neural network, which is composed of the stacked autoen- coder and softmax regression layer. The deep flow features can be obtained from the stacked autoencoder automatically instead of the manual feature selection and extraction. The softmax regression layer is used as the classifier to realize the application classification. Finally, simulation results demonstrate that our pro- posed classification method is effective and gets higher classification accuracy than the support vector machine–based classification method

As well known, accurate network application classification is important and useful for many network activities such as network management, quality-of-service (QoS) provisioning, network security, and intrusion detection. 1 Networkapplication classification classifies different network traffic and divides the traffic into different classes. To achieve accu- rate network applications, a large number of different application classification methods have been proposed in the past few decades, mainly including port-based approach, payload-based approach, and machine learning–based approach. 2 In current years, the most widely used technology for application classification is the machine learning–based approach, in which backpropagation (BP) neural network, Bayesian network, support vector machine (SVM), and C4.5 decision tree are usually applied to the classification. 3-11 Different from identifying port number in the port-based approach as well as inspecting payload content in the payload-based approach, in machine learning–based classification methods, the flow features statistics, including the size of packet, interpacket time, and flow duration time, are used to automatically identify and classify network applica- tion by using machine learning. The shallow neural network is generally used to build the application classifier in lots of machine learning–based classification methods. The shallow neural network has limited feature learning ability because of few nonlinear feature extraction layers, and it is more suitable to deal with small-scale data problems. However, with the constant enlargement of network scale and the coming of the big data era, network traffic explosively grows, and large amounts of novel network applications have generated. It is very challenging for traditional shallow neural network–based classification method to deal with massive network traffic because of the limited feature learning ability. In order to extract deep feature and obtain high-level feature presentation from a large-scale data set, deep learning network is required. Recently, deep learning has been proposed, and some deep neural network models, for example, stacked autoencoder, convolutional neural network (CNN), and deep belief network (DBN), have been widely applied in many fields such as classification, speech recognition, and natural language processing. 12 Deep learning is a novel machine learning algorithm that is used to train deeper neural networks. By contrast, traditional learning algorithm, which is adopted to train shallow neural networks, is not suitable for training deep neural networks because of the reason of easily getting stuck in local optima and diffusion of gradient. 13 Compared with traditional shallow neural networks, deep neural networks contain multiple hidden layers such that it has the stronger nonlinear feature extraction ability to achieve the higher level or more complex feature presentation. Meanwhile, deep neural networks have the ability of yielding higher classification accuracy than shallow neural networks. Hence, in this paper, we propose a novel classification method on the basis of the hybrid deep learning network model.

Network Traffic Classifier (NTC) is an important part of current network monitoring systems, being its task to infer the network service that is currently used by a communication flow (e.g. HTTP, SIP. . .). The detection is based on a number of features associated with the communication flow, for example, source and destination ports and bytes transmitted per packet. NTC is important because much information about a current network flow can be learned and anticipated just by knowing its network service (required latency, traffic volume, possible duration. . .). This is of particular interest for the management and monitoring of Internet of Things (IoT) networks, where NTC will help to segregate traffic and behavior of heterogeneous devices and services. In this paper, we present a new technique for NTC based on a combination of deep learning models that can be used for IoT traffic. We show that a Recurrent Neural Network (RNN) combined with a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) provides best detection results. The natural domain for a CNN, which is image processing, has been extended to NTC in an easy and natural way. We show that the proposed method provides better detection results than alternative algorithms without requiring any feature engineering, which is usual when applying other models. A complete study is presented on several architectures that integrate a CNN and an RNN, including the impact of the features chosen and the length of the network flows used for training.

Index Terms—Application classification, Encrypted traffic classification, LSTM, CNN

1 INTRODUCTION

[2] With a profusion of network applications, traf- fic classification plays a crucial role in network management and policy-based security control. The widely used encryption transmission protocols, such as the secure socket layer/transport layer security (SSL/TLS) protocols, lead to the failure of tradi- tional payload-based classification methods. Existing methods for encrypted traffic classification cannot achieve high discrimination accuracy for applications with similar fingerprints. Ins. In this paper, we propose an attribute-aware encrypted traffic classification method based on the second-order Markov Chains. We start by exploring approaches that can further improve the performance of existing methods in terms of discrimination accuracy, and make promising observations that the application attribute bigram, which consists of the certificate packet length and the first application data size in SSL/TLS sessions, contributes to application discrimination. To increase the diversity of applica- tion fingerprints, we develop a new method by incorporating the attribute bigrams into the second-order homogeneous Markov chains. Extensive evaluation results show that the proposed method can improve the classification accuracy by 29

NETWORK traffic is composed of packets carrying data belonging to a variety of applications. Classification of traffic helps network operators to identify specific applications and protocols that exist in a network, which can be useful for many different purposes [19], [32], [33], such as network planning, application prioritization for QoS guarantees, and policy deployment for security control. For instance, a network operator might want to assign traffic from known popular applications with a higher priority for better user experience, and an enterprise network operator might block traffic from a given application by means of application-level firewalls. Traditional traffic classification techniques are often designed based on the analysis of packet contents, such as the port-based methods and the payload-based methods. In recent years we have seen a dramatic growth in the usage of encryp- tion protocols, such as the SSL/TLS protocols [13], [16]. Since packet payloads are encrypted, these methods can no longer fulfil efficient recognition. Therefore, it is desirable to develop classification methods for encrypted traffic [12]. Korczynski and Duda proposed such a method by using the

[3] A Network Traffic Classifier (NTC) is an important part of current network monitoring systems, being its task to infer the network service that is currently used by a communication flow (e.g. HTTP, SIP. . .). The detection is based on a number of features associated with the communication flow, for example, source and destination ports and bytes transmitted per packet. NTC is important because much information about a current network flow can be learned and anticipated just by knowing its network service (required latency, traffic volume, possible duration. . .). This is of particular interest for the management and monitoring of Internet of Things (IoT) networks, where NTC will help to segregate traffic and behavior of heterogeneous devices and services. In this paper, we present a new technique for NTC based on a combination of deep learning models that can be used for IoT traffic. We show that a Recurrent Neural Network (RNN) combined with a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) provides best detection results. The natural domain for a CNN, which is image processing, has been extended to NTC in an easy and natural way. We show that the proposed method provides better detection results than alternative algorithms without requiring any feature engineering, which is usual when applying other models. A complete study is presented on several architectures that integrate a CNN and an RNN, including the impact of the features chosen and the length of the network flows used for training.

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2 RELATED WORK

[1] In recent years, many research works have already applied machine learning methods in network application classification. 2-11,23,24 Most of them are focused on improving the machine learning algorithm and feature selection since the selected features and machine learning algorithm have a great effect on the classifier's performance. However, with the explosive growth of network traffic, it is very difficult for the current network architecture to deal with large amounts of data. Therefore, to obtain a set of optimal flow features and improve the classification accuracy, Santos da Silva et al 24 designed a novel flow features selection architecture, which could determine the optimal subset of flow features for the classification of different types of traffic flows by taking advantage of the SDN architecture. Different from most research works on application classification, to achieve the classification and satisfy the QoS requirement of the network application at the same time, Wang et al 11 devised a QoS-aware traffic classification framework in SDN. In this framework, deep packet inspection technology was used to detect the elephant flow, and the semisupervised machine learning algorithm was used to achieve the QoS-aware traffic classification through the mapping function. Specifically, the application flow was mapped to a certain predefined QoS class according to flow features in the mapping function. Inspired by the aforementioned research works, in this paper, we propose an application classification framework by combing SDN and deep learning. With the powerful computing capability, we use the controller to deal with the massive network traffic and flow statistics. We construct a hybrid deep learning network model, which is composed of the stacked autoencoder and the softmax regression layer, to extract flow features and build the application classifie

3 THE PROPOSED METHOD

4 EXPERIMENTS

To evaluate the performance of the proposed application classification method, we have conducted extensive simulation experiments.

TABLE 2 Network application classification[8]

Classification	Application
Bulk	ftp
Database	postgress, sqlnet oracle, ingress
Interactive	Ssh, klogin, rlogin, telnet
Mail	imap, pop2/3, smtp
Services	X11, dns, ident, ldap, ntp
WWW	www
P2P	KaZaA, BitTorrent, GnuTella
Attack	Internet worm and virus attacks
Games	Microsoft Direct Play
Multimedia	Windows Media Player, Real

Abbreviations: P2P, peer-to-peer; WWW, World Wide Web.

Fig. 1. Simulation results for the network.

4.1 Dataset

[] We evaluate the proposed deep learning–based application classification method on the real-world traffic data set. We select the Moore data set for testing the application classification method, which is obtained from the computer laboratory in the University of Cambridge and has been widely used in many traffic classification research works. 2,6,8,23,34 The data set is composed of 10 separate data sets collected in the different period of a day, and each data set is only composed of TCP traffic flows. In each data set, for any TCP traffic flow, its 248 flow features such as the size of flow and the duration time of flow and the corresponding application class label are recorded. All network flows are categorized into 10 classes (ie, World Wide Web (WWW), Mail, Bulk, Services, peer-to-peer (P2P), Database, Attack, Interactive, Games, and Multimedia). The traffic classification and the corresponding network applications are summarized in Table 2. Furthermore, to keep the balance of the sample data set, we delete the corresponding 2 types of application samples from the 10 data sets because the sample numbers of Games and Interactive are relatively small. Moreover, to make the data set more uniform and to get more accurate simulation results, we randomly select sample data from the 10 data sets and classify all the network applications into 10 classes (ie, WWW, Mail, File Transfer Protocol (FTP)–control, FTP-pasv, Attack, P2P, Database, FTP-data, Multimedia, and Services).

5 Discussions

6 Conclusion

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Appendix A
Proof of the First Zonklar Equation

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