AUTOMATIC DETECTION OF CYBER SECURITY EVENTS FROM TURKISH TWITTER STREAM AND TURKISH NEWSPAPER DATA

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# ABSTRACT

AUTOMATIC DETECTION OF CYBER SECURITY EVENTS FROM TURKISH TWITTER STREAM AND TURKISH NEWSPAPER DATA

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May 2019, XX pages

Internet has many different kind of timely information. Every day, security experts scan the internet and face with lots of security events that effect people, institutions and governments. An information analyst constantly scan many sources to staying up to date on security events require, which leads to information overload to them. For example, an information analyst might want to be aware of cyber security incidents such as a DDOS attack on a government agency website. The earlier they are able to detect and understand the threats, the longer time remaining to alleviate the obstacle and to investigate them forensic. Therefore, they need to have a situation awareness of the existing security events and their possible effects. However, due to the large number of events, it can be difficult for security analysts and researchers to handle this flow of information in an adequate manner. Moreover, internet uses different languages to share informations, like the humans do. As expected, security events related informations which effect Turkish people, Turkish institutions and Turkish government also share in internet mostly in Turkish language. In this thesis, I investigate detection of existing security incidents with using Turkish language, ITU NLP Api, Twitter social network and Hürriyet Turkish newspaper. I propose an automatic, Turkish language specific software system that can detect cyber security events in real time over the Twitter stream in Turkish language and Hurriyet newspaper stream.

Keywords: Cyber Security, Event Detection, Turkish, Twitter, Hurriyet Newspaper.

# ÖZ\_\_

TÜRKÇE TWITTER AKIŞI VE TÜRKÇE GAZETE VERİLERDEN SİBER GÜVENLİK OLAYLARININ OTOMATİK TESPİT EDİLMESİ

Ural, Özgür

Yüksek Lisans, Siber Güvenlik Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Cengiz Acartürk

Mayıs 2019, XX sayfa

İnternet birçok farkı zamana bağlı bilgi içerir. Güvenlik uzmanları her gün interneti tarıyor ve insanları, kurumları ve hükümetleri etkileyen birçok güvenlik olayıyla karşı karşıya kalıyorlar. Bir bilgi analisti, gerekli olan güvenlik olayları hakkında güncel bilgi sahibi olmak için sürekli olarak birçok kaynak taramakta ve bu da onlarda aşırı bilgi yüklenmesine neden olmaktadır. Örneğin, bir bilgi analisti, bir devlet kurumu web sitesine yapılan DDOS saldırısı gibi siber güvenlik olaylarının farkında olmak isteyebilir. Tehditleri ne kadar erken saptarsa ​​ve anlarlarsa, problemleri hafifletmek ve adli olarak soruşturmak için o kadar uzun süreye sahip olurlar. Bu nedenle, mevcut güvenlik olayları ve olası etkileri hakkında durum bilgisine sahip olmaları gerekir. Ancak, çok sayıda olay nedeniyle, güvenlik analistlerinin ve araştırmacıların bu bilgi akışını yeterli şekilde ele alması zor olabilir. Ayrıca internet, insanlar gibi bilgileri paylaşmak için farklı dilleri kullanır. Beklenildiği gibi, Türk halkını, Türk kurumlarını ve Türk hükümetini etkileyen güvenlik olayları ile ilgili bilgiler de çoğunlukla Türkçe olarak internette paylaşılmaktadır. Bu tezde, mevcut güvenlik olaylarının tespitini Türk dilini, İTÜ NLP Api, Twitter sosyal ağı ve Hürriyet gazetesini kullanarak araştırıyorum. Türk dilindeki Twitter akışında ve Hürriyet gazetesi akışında siber güvenlik olaylarını gerçek zamanlı olarak algılayabilen otomatik, Türkçe’ye özgü bir yazılım sistemi öneriyorum.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Siber Güvenlik, Olay Tespiti, Türkçe, Twitter, Hürriyet Gazetesi.

# DEDICATION

To My Family

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I would like to express …..

Besides my supervisor, I would like to thank …..

I would also like to thank all of colleagues from …..

To my wife, …..

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **DDOS** | Distributed Denial of Service |
| **DOS** | Denial of Service |

**CHAPTER 1**CHAPTER

# INTRODUCTION

## Motivation

Security awareness tools helps security analysts to protect a company's sensitive and mission-critical data from being stolen, damaged or compromised by hackers. The delay between the disclosure and the moment when the security analyst is aware for each newly discovered vulnerability is very important.

On 3 January 2013, Google announced a security vulnerability which could allow spoofing using fraudulent digital certificates issued by TURKTRUST Inc.[1] Other companies like Microsoft and Mozilla which may affect from this vulnerability followed Google and announced the vulnerability, shared their affected software and devices and suggested actions. After these announcements, Twitter and Turkish newspapers showed quick reaction. As you can see in the Figure 1.1, Twitter users had shared the information on the same day immediately after the announcement on 3 January 2013. I notice that one of the profile who share information about the vulnerability was Asst. Prof. Dr. Süleyman Özarslan, one of the past instructors of METU Cyber Security Department. This is an example of even university professors share timely and valuable informations at Twitter. Because of TurkTrust directly related with Turkey, there were so many Tweets in Turkish related with that vulnerability. According to Statistia website, Twitter has 321 million monthly active users at worldwide[2] and with nearly 9 million active users Turkey is fifth country in the list of leading countries based on number of Twitter users as of January 2019.[3] Twitter users can tweet in any languages they wish. As predictable, 9 million Turkish Twitter users share their tweets generally in Turkish language.

During my literature review and commercial research and products reviews, I realized that even there are a few researches and products to focus on automatic security Event Detection, they mainly focus data mining in English language. There is no research focused on real time security event detection focused Turkish language streams. With emerging internet adoption in Turkey, there are many timely information shared within Turkish language. These Turkish informations not much useful without automated event detection systems Turkish tweets can be also used to detect cyber security events if Turkish language specific steps and requirements shall be added to the detection systems and algorithms.

Figure 1: Tweets in Turkish After the TurkTrust Vulnerability Announcement on 3 January 2013



Of course, social media is not only option to learn such information. The security analyst has a wide range of sources available like specialized press, blogs, forums, news agencies, newspapers and so on to gather cyber threat informations. However, their first reference for detect such security events is generally social networks. After a trending event occurred, people increasingly share posts about it on social media. To illustrate, A DDOS attack to a service or a website generally firstly recognized and reported by users and they share that on online platforms like tweeting "X website is unreachable".

An alternative way to learn such information is newspapers. After the Türktrust SSL vulnerability in 2013, the newspapers also share that information as fast as possible. In the Figure 1.2 can be seen a news published in Hurriyet newspaper related with the vulnerability.[4]

Figure 2: Hürriyet newspaper news after the Turktrust SSL vulnerability detected



An autonomous system which can use different kind of data source for security event detection would be very useful for a security analyst. I designed and developed a software system capable of detecting and monitoring cyber security related events over the Twitter Stream in Turkish. It can technically process millions of documents per day and detect security events. To gain more accurate results, I added Hürriyet Turkish newspaper stream to analyze and detect security events. The software solution’s infrastructure supports adding new data resources easily. For example, it can be added LinkedIn, Facebook, Eksisozluk website streams to gain more accurate results.

## Objectives

The objectives of this thesis are that;

* Researching and comparing “state of the art” studies and software systems in real time event detection with literature review.
* Researching possible data sources to determine the omst suitable ones to use it for real time event detection with Turkish language.
* Research useful studies and Api’s related with NLP to use it for normalization of Turkish texts.
* Designing and developing the software system to use it real time cyber security event detection with using Turkish texts.
* Design the system as a framework in order to be used it for other researches. Turkish datasets is very useful for various research areas like text classification, author detection, automatic question answering and so on. However finding datasets in Turkish language is extremely hard because there is not enough shared datasets online. With the thesis software framework researchers easily get datasets in Turkish language. Moreover they can select and modify their queries with changing keyword vectors.
* Validating the proposed approach using several detected events within shared in Turkish language.

## Use Cases

Cyber security is an emerging topic in Turkey just like the rest of the world. There are few researches about automated security event detection system in the world. But these are mainly focus on data mining in English language. Even if these systems can be very useful for detecting global level cyber security events such systems cannot be used with other languages like Turkish, because data mining is a language specific area. Security analysts who work in Turkey or just interested in Turkey specific security events can be use data in Turkish language to detect such events. With observing these, a security analyst gets situation awareness in cyberspace and take actions against new threads. For example, assume that you are a security analyst work for a Turkish company and your company uses local websites api like ekşisozluk api e-devlet api or libraries/frameworks developed for focused Turkish people. If these api’s, libraries or frameworks has vulnerabilities and they are newly discovered, they are probably discussed and announced within social media like Twitter in Turkish. Turkish newspapers are published it as breaking news and so on. To detect such events automatically, the software system shall listen Turkish data sources and process the data Turkish language specific. My research meets these requirements to develop such software system and framework.

## Outline

* Chapter 2 is related with background information. Technologies, terminologies and common terms discussed and explained in this section.
* In Chapter 3, It is shared literature researches related with my thesis.
* In Chapter 4, the software system is explained architectural and design perspective.
* In Chapter 5, the software system is explained implementation and evelutation perspective.
* In Chapter 6, thesis results are discussed.
* And finally in chapter 7, the conclusion is stated and possible future works are explained.

**CHAPTER 2**

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## What is an Information Security Analyst?

According to careerexplorer website[5] an information security analysts main responsibility is taking measures to protect his company’s mission critical and sensitive information and be prepared for cyber attack. In order to be prepared for cyber attack they use different tools and systems. One of their responsibilty is analyzing data and recommending changes to higher ups. However they are not authorize and implement changes. Their main job is keeping cyber attacks out.

The analyst challenge:

* A typical day involves 10 to 20 challange
* Errors such as false positive and false negative are common
* Investigating incidents takes time, giving attackers an advantage

A day in the life of thread investigator:

* 1 hour of a thread investigator spends with getting cought up on the latest security news through bulletins and social networks in order to identify new threads.
* 3 hours of a thread investigator spends with repeatedly investigatation of potential security incidents via online sources.
* 4 hours a thread investigator spends with manually copying and pasting information from disparate and siloed tools to correlate data

All this mundane time spent and unable to keep up with threads.



It is not sustainable without a cognative soultion.

## What is Natural Language Processing?

Natural Language Processing (NLP) is “ability of machines to understand and interpret human language the way it is written or spoken”[6].

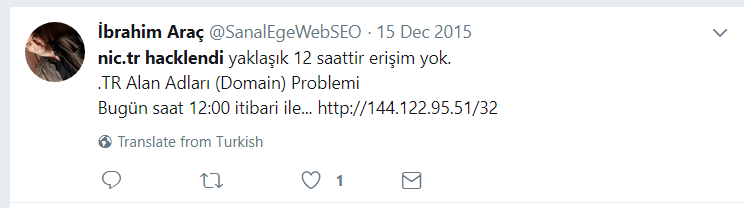


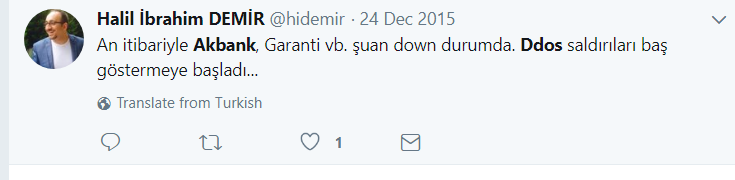
## Why do we need Natural Language Processing?

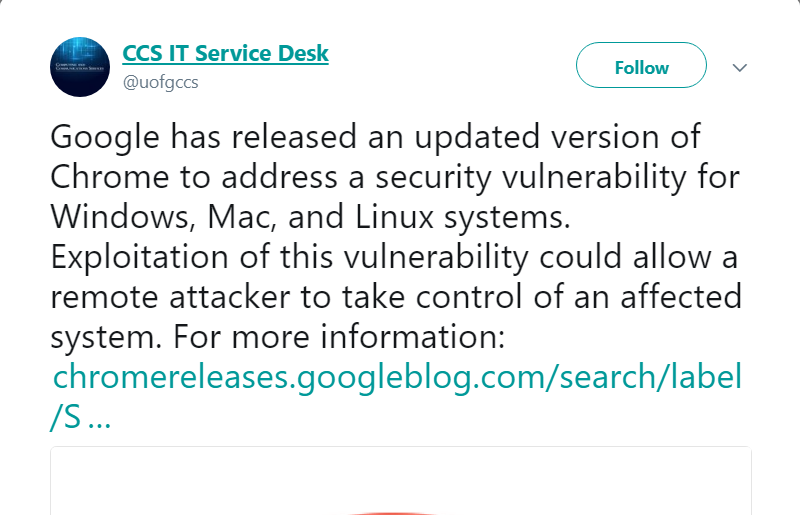




## Sample Tweets Related with a Security Incident









Sample False Positive:



A cognative solution that learns about security from structured and unstructured information sources, and empower security analysts with insights to respond to incidents with speed and accurancy like never before.

## Why is NLP Hard?

Language is highly ambiguous– it relies on subtle cues and contexts to convey meaning.

Take this simple example: “I love flying planes.”

Do I enjoy participating in the act of piloting an aircraft? Or am I expressing an appreciation for man-made vehicles engaged in movement through the air on wings?

A single sentence can carry different meanings. After thousands of years of evolution, languages have evolved to become shorter and less explicit. For humans, this is very efficient.

## Twitter Social Network

* + 1. What is Twitter?

Twitter is an online social networking service, which was created in October, 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Even Williams and Biz Stone. Twitter can be used for various purposes[7].

First of all, It can be used as a social messaging service. Users can interact with the other users, communicate with their friends and family and share details of their lives. Secondly, It can be use as a micro blogging service for sharing details of a person’s life. Thirdly, Twitter can be used as a marketing tool for public relations. Many celebrities and politicians use Twitter for interacting with their audience. Lastly, Twitter is an information platform on which users can get news via broadcasting agents’ or journalists’ accounts fast and easily. Moreover, there are lot of Twitter bots created by developers for a precise function like Bitcoin ticker bot will tweet every hour the price of Bitcoin in USD.

According to the first quantitative study on Twitter “What is Twitter, a Social Network or a News Media?” which is published in 2010[8], Twitter is more an information sharing network than a social network. They found that result while working on Twitter follower graph. They decided that because of the low rate of reciprocated ties. People tend to use Twitter as a news feed by following multiple online news media but other Twitter users will only follow “real” users.

### Mechanism and Specific Terminology

On Twitter, any registered user can post a short message called a Tweet (Figure 2.1), this message cannot be more than 280 characters. Files like photos or videos can be added to the tweets and are not counted is the number of characters. Users can also add URL, which are automatically shortened in order to save space using Twitter’s URL shortening service. These hyperlinks usually start with “https://t.co/XX” where XX is a random sequence of characters.

Figure 2.1: Screenshot of a Tweet Containing the Number of Replies, Retweets and Likes

As soon as they register on Twitter, the users are prompted to follow accounts they might be interested in (usually classified by category such as sport or high-tech). By following other accounts, the users create their own network (which forms a simple directed graph) and subscribe to the other users’ Tweets. At first the connection is unilateral, followed accounts can decide to follow back if they are interested in the content of their follower. Each Twitter account maintain a count of followers (the number of people following the account) and following (the number of people the account is following), see Figure 2.2 for an example. When they register, Twitter users can write a short description about them and precise where they live.

Figure 2.2: Screenshot of the Twitter Account of Barack Obama

Twitter accounts are by default public and anyone can see a user’s post. Users can interact by replying to each other’s tweets with the reply button or by writing a tweet starting with a “@” and the user screen name. They can also send a private direct message (DM) to other accounts which are also constrained within 140 characters. User can also mention other user in their tweet by writing “@” followed by the user screen name. A mention is constructed the same way as reply, but the Twitter handle is not the first thing in the post. When a Twitter user want to share another user tweet with his followers, he can retweet the tweet. In general popularity of a tweet is measured by the number of retweets.

Finally, the last important concept in Twitter is the hashtag. A hashtag is a word or a sequence of word preceded by a hash sign (#). Hashtags are used to identify tweets on a specific topic. Twitter automatically uses these hashtags to create geolocated trending topics: a list of the most used hashtags per place (see Figure 2.3). This is especially useful to quickly identify which subjects are currently discuss on the social network.

Figure 2.3: Screenshot of the Worldwide Trending Topics in Twitter

Tweets can also be geolocated. On mobile client, a user can share his exact location (GPS

coordinates) or manually select a place near him. On desktop, users can decide to turn on their location and choose from a predefined list of cities around them.

In January 2017, Twitter had 317 million monthly active users, 500 millions tweets per day with 80% of the twitters tweeting from mobile devices1.

### Working with Twitter Data

Twitter provides several Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) to get tweets:

1See https://www.omnicoreagency.com/twitter-statistics/.

A REST (REpresentational State Transfer) API2 designed to read and write Twitter data.

With this API a developer can control his own account and access Twitter Data such as other persons tweets or descriptions. This API also contains the Twitter Search API, allowing “queries against the indices of recent or popular Tweets and behaves similarly to, but not exactly like the Search feature available in Twitter mobile or web clients, such as Twitter.com search”. This last API will not retrieve tweets older than 7 days. A Streaming API3 which gives developers access to realtime data in Twitter such as a 1%

sample of all the tweets. This API also allows developers to get all the tweets from a user or for a specific set of keywords (up to 1% of the Twitter volume). The GNIP API4 is a pay-per-use API. GNIP, a company purchased by Twitter in 2014, is specialized in social media API aggregation. GNIP API for Twitter is the same as REST and STREAMING APIs without any limitations.

## Hürriyet Turkish Newspaper as a Data Source

* + 1. What is Hurriyet Newspaper?

Hürriyet is one of the major Turkish newspapers, founded in 1948. As of January 2018, it had the highest circulation of any newspaper in Turkey at around 319,000.[9]

* + 1. Hurriyet Newspaper API

Hürriyet API (application programming interface) is an interface which enables the usage of Hürriyet data programmatically in web / mobile / desktop applications. It is a free service for now. With Hürriyet API, can be reached news, columns, writers, photo galleries and pages. Hürriyet API was established with a RESTful-based, resource-oriented architecture. Hürriyet data can be accessed via standard HTTP requests. The resultant set of results is in JSON format. Requests via the API are limited to 5 per second and 500 per hour to prevent abuse.[10]

* + 1. What is OData

The OData (Open Data Protocol) REST-based data source using the HTTP protocol is a global protocol for querying services.

With the OData standards, you can quickly, without wasting much time on basic standards such as request and response headers, status codes, HTTP methods (GET, POST and so on), and query options. you can only create RESTful APIs by building business logic.

It is easy to consume OData services. OData metadata is easily rendered by the client - interpretable. Therefore, integration into powerful and expandable client applications can be done quickly and easily.

* + 1. Hürriyet API - OData Usage

The OData structure has a unique query structure. Below are some of the most basic query keywords and their functionality briefly outlined:

$ select -> Limits the columns / properties in the response set from the query. Example use;

* https://api.hurriyet.com.tr/v1/articles?$select=Title

To limit relational properties such as Files, RelatedNews; it is necessary to use $ select filter with $ expand. Example use;

* https://api.hurriyet.com.tr/v1/articles?$select=Files&$expand=Files

$ filter -> By adding a filter to the query, the answer set can be limited. Example use;

* https://api.hurriyet.com.tr/v1/articles?$filter=Path eq '/gundem/'

ball -> Limit the number of records in the response set that will be returned from the query. Example use;

* https://api.hurriyet.com.tr/v1/articles?$top=3

You can also use these keywords together to increase the number of filters in the result set and make it easier to reach the desired result set. Example use;

https://api.hurriyet.com.tr/v1/articles?$select=Title&$filter=ModifiedDate ge Datetime'2014-10-10T10: 41: 31Z '& $ top = 3

Using OData protocol on Hürriyet API service;

News in the system (Articles),

Columns in the system,

In-system photo galleries (NewsPhotoGalleries),

The pages in the system and the pages assigned to the pages (Pages),

Folders in the system (Paths),

Writers

you can query and use them in your applications.

**CHAPTER 3**

# LITERATURE REVIEW

**CHAPTER 4**

# SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

## Approach

## Taxonamy

## Data Collection

## Data Preprocessing

## Event Detection

**CHAPTER 5**

# IMPLEMANTATION AND EVALUATION

## Implemantation

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**CHAPTER 6**

# RESULTS

**CHAPTER 7**

# CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

## Conclusion

## Future Work

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# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A

**TITLE**

xxx

# APPENDIX B

**TITLE**

xxx