GuardianGaze: Anomaly-Based Network Intrusion Detection System

Abstract

This paper presents an AI-powered Anomaly-Based Intrusion Detection System (IDS) enhanced with percolation theory and leveraging the NF-UQ-NIDS-v2 dataset. The proposed system prioritizes network packets with higher anomaly indicators, reducing computational overhead while improving detection efficiency. By dynamically adjusting detection thresholds based on real-time network traffic, the system enhances scalability and adaptability to varying attack patterns. Machine learning algorithms such as Support Vector Machine (SVM), K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN), Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP), Random Forest, and Extra Trees classifiers analyze packets that meet percolation thresholds to detect cyber threats. The system effectively identifies attack vectors such as Denial of Service (DoS), Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS), scanning attacks, and reconnaissance attempts. Evaluations demonstrate significant improvements in accuracy and false positive rates compared to traditional IDS solutions. The integration of percolation theory allows the IDS to focus on high-risk traffic clusters, optimizing resource allocation and response times. Our results show that this approach is particularly suitable for high throughput network environments. This approach is that rapid and accurate abnormality recognition is extremely important. This paper highlights the importance of integrating sophisticated statistical models with AI control approaches to develop robust real-time cybersecurity solutions.

Keywords: Anomaly Detection; Intrusion Detection System; Machine Learning; Cybersecurity; NF-UQ-NIDS; Network Security; Real-Time Detection; Model Evaluation

1 Introduction

In the rapidly evolving domain of cybersecurity, the ability to detect and mitigate network intrusions in real-time has become a critical necessity. As cyber threats become more complex, volume and refined, traditional intrusion detection systems (IDs) are increasingly questioned by their reliance on predefined signatures, false positive rates, and inefficiency in large-scale processing. These limitations often render them ineffective against novel or unknown attacks, leaving networks vulnerable to emerging threats. To address these challenges, we introduce GuardianGaze, an advanced anomaly-based Network Intrusion Detection System (NIDS) that integrates percolation theory with state-of-the-art machine learning (ML) techniques to enhance detection accuracy, scalability, and operational efficiency.

GuardianGaze is designed to identify a wide spectrum of cyberattacks, including Denial of Service (DoS), Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS), scanning attacks, cross-site scripting (XSS), reconnaissance attacks, and password-based intrusions. At the core of its innovation lies the application of percolation theory, a mathematical framework

traditionally used in physics and network science to study the behavior of connected clusters in random graphs. In relation to network detection, percolation theory is used to identify clusters of abnormal behavior of network traffic, so the system excludes packages with most risk, while simultaneously prioritizing traffic. This approach significantly reduces the computational burden, allowing for real-time detection even in high-throughput environments.

The system uses the NF-UQ-NIDS-V2 dataset, a comprehensive and up-to-date dataset containing over 75 million data records of benign and malicious network activity. This data record provides a robust foundation for training machine learning models to enable Guardiangaze to recognize various cyber threats. By treating specific network features—such as Layer 7 protocols (L7_PROTO), TCP flags, and flow durations—as "nodes," the system monitors their behavior over time. When the frequency of these features exceeds predefined thresholds, a "percolation event" is triggered, signaling a potential anomaly. This dynamic thresholding mechanism allows GuardianGaze to adapt to changing network conditions, ensuring consistent performance across varying traffic loads.

The integration of percolation theory with machine learning models—such as Support Vector Machines (SVM), k-Nearest Neighbors (KNN), Random Forest, and Decision Trees—further enhances the system's detection capabilities. These models are employed to classify and analyze suspicious network traffic, minimizing false positives and maximizing detection accuracy. The combination of percolation-based filtering and machine learning enables GuardianGaze to focus computational resources on the most critical traffic, improving both efficiency and scalability. This dual-layered approach not only enhances real-time detection but also provides a proactive defense mechanism against both known and unknown threats.

To ensure usability and provide actionable insights, GuardianGaze incorporates advanced visualization tools such as Grafana and Kibana. These tools offer administrators a clear, color-coded representation of detected threats, enabling quick identification and response to potential security incidents. The system's intuitive interface, combined with its robust detection capabilities, makes it an ideal solution for enterprise and cloud environments where security needs to be both strong and efficient.

In this article, we present the design, implementation, and evaluation of GuardianGaze, with a particular emphasis on the innovative application of percolation theory in network intrusion detection. We explore how this mathematical framework, combined with machine learning, enables the system to achieve a balance between accuracy and

computational efficiency. By dynamically adjusting detection thresholds based on real-time network traffic patterns, GuardianGaze ensures adaptability and resilience in the face of evolving cyber threats. This project represents a significant advancement in the field of cybersecurity, offering a scalable, efficient, and adaptive solution to safeguard critical digital infrastructures in an increasingly interconnected world.

2 Materials and Methods

2.1 Data Collection

The data used in this study comes from two major sources: real-time network traffic and NF-UQ-NIDS-V2 dataset. The NF-UQ-NIDS-v2 dataset is a comprehensive and highly detailed collection of network activity records, comprising approximately 75 million entries. This dataset is particularly valuable because it encompasses a wide range of network behaviors, including both benign, everyday network activities and a diverse array of cyberattack scenarios. The attack types shown in the data records include attacks (denial of service (DOS) that aim to overwhelm a network or service in an unavailable way ; DDOS Distributed Denial of Attacks (DDOS), which involve multiple systems coordinating to amplify the impact of a DoS attack; brute force attacks, where attackers attempt to gain unauthorized access by systematically trying various password combinations; data exfiltration, which involves the unauthorized transfer of data from a network; and reconnaissance attempts, where attackers gather information about a network to identify vulnerabilities for future exploitation.

The NF-UQ-NIDS-v2 dataset was specifically chosen for this study due to its high level of granularity, which provides detailed insights into network traffic patterns, and its inclusion of a broad spectrum of attack simulations. These characteristics make the dataset particularly well-suited for training and evaluating anomaly detection models, as it allows for the development of robust systems capable of distinguishing between normal network behavior and potential threats. By using this data record, this study aims to improve the accuracy and reliability of anomaly recognition mechanisms in identifying and reducing cyberthreats in real network environments.

2.1.1 Packet Capture Tools

To facilitate real-time network traffic monitoring and analysis, we utilized a combination of powerful packet capture tools, each offering unique capabilities to suit different aspects of our research. These tools enabled us to capture, dissect, and analyze network traffic with precision, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the data flows and protocols under investigation.

Scapy: A versatile, Python-based interactive packet manipulation tool, Scapy provides extensive functionality for crafting, sending, sniffing, and dissecting network packets. Its flexibility allows users to create custom packets with specific protocols, fields, and payloads, making it an invaluable tool for simulating network traffic and testing network behavior. In our work, Scapy was primarily used to generate synthetic network packets for testing purposes and to analyze live traffic in real-time. Its ability to decode and interpret a wide range of protocols made it particularly useful for identifying anomalies and extracting detailed packet-level information.

PyShark: As a Python wrapper for the Wireshark packet capture library, PyShark bridges the gap between Wireshark's powerful packet analysis capabilities and Python's scripting flexibility. This tool was instrumental in enabling real-time packet capture and filtering, allowing us to extract specific network features such as TCP flags, payload size, and protocol metadata. By leveraging PyShark, we were able to automate the extraction of relevant data from live traffic, streamlining the preprocessing phase and ensuring that only pertinent information was retained for further analysis.

tcpdump: A robust, command-line packet analyzer, tcpdump is widely regarded for its efficiency and simplicity in capturing network packets. Operating at the command line, it provides a lightweight yet powerful solution for capturing raw network traffic, which can then be exported for further processing and analysis. In our research, tcpdump was used to capture large volumes of network packets, creating a raw dataset that served as the foundation for subsequent preprocessing and analysis. Its ability to filter traffic based on specific criteria, such as IP addresses, ports, or protocols, ensured that we could focus on the most relevant data for our study.

Wireshark: A GUI-based network protocol analyzer, Wireshark is one of the most widely used tools for network traffic inspection and analysis. Its intuitive interface and comprehensive protocol support make it ideal for visually inspecting packet flows, identifying patterns, and validating the integrity of collected data. In our work, Wireshark was employed to perform a detailed visual inspection of captured traffic, allowing us to verify the accuracy of our data and gain deeper insights into the behavior of network protocols. Its ability to decode and display packet contents in a human-readable format was particularly useful for troubleshooting and validating the results obtained from other tools.

By combining these tools, we were able to achieve a holistic approach to network traffic monitoring and analysis, leveraging the strengths of each tool to address different aspects of our research. This multi-tool methodology ensured that we could

capture, process, and analyze network traffic with a high degree of accuracy and efficiency, ultimately contributing to the robustness and reliability of our findings.

2.1.2 Dataset Features

The dataset comprises 43 extended NetFlow features, which were extracted and analyzed for anomaly detection. The most relevant features used in our analysis include:

L7_PROTO (Application Layer Protocol): Indicates the application-layer protocol (e.g., HTTP, FTP, DNS) used in the network packet.

FLOW_DURATION_MILLISECONDS: Represents the duration of network flows in milliseconds, useful for identifying persistent connections that may indicate attacks.

MIN_IP_PKT_LEN and MAX_IP_PKT_LEN: The minimum and maximum packet lengths observed in a given session, which can indicate fragmentation attacks or unusually large payloads.

SERVER_TCP_FLAGS and CLIENT_TCP_FLAGS: TCP state flag indicators that help in detecting suspicious connection behaviors such as SYN floods or stealth scans.

L4_SRC_PORT: The source port number of the network packet, useful for detecting unusual port activity.

TCP_WIN_MAX_OUT: The maximum TCP window size observed in an ongoing connection, which can signal abnormal congestion control behaviors.

RETRANSMITTED_OUT_PKTS: The count of retransmitted packets, which may indicate potential denial-of-service attacks or unreliable connections.
Each network packet is labeled as either benign or malicious, allowing for supervised learning approaches in anomaly detection.

2.2.2 Feature Selection
Feature selection was performed to reduce dimensionality, improve computational efficiency, and enhance model interpretability. A two-step approach was used:

- Random Forest Feature Importance: The dataset was first analyzed using a Random Forest classifier, which provides an inherent feature importance score based on how much each attribute contributes to the prediction. Features with consistently low importance scores were flagged for removal.

- Recursive Feature Elimination (RFE): RFE was applied to iteratively eliminate the least significant features, ensuring that only the most relevant attributes were retained. This method helps improve model performance by reducing redundancy and preventing overfitting, which is particularly important in high-dimensional datasets.The final set of selected features primarily consisted of traffic-related attributes such as packet size variations, TCP flag distributions, and flow duration, which are strong indicators of malicious activity.

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2.2.3 Encoding Categorical Data

Since many intrusion detection features are categorical (e.g., protocol types, TCP flags, and attack categories), they needed to be converted into numerical representations for compatibility with machine learning algorithms. The following encoding techniques were employed:

One-Hot Encoding (OHE): Used for nominal categorical variables such as protocol type (e.g., TCP, UDP, ICMP) and service types, ensuring that categorical attributes were transformed into binary vectors. This method prevents the model from misinterpreting categorical data as ordinal values.
Label Encoding: Applied to ordinal categorical variables where an inherent ranking exists, such as severity levels of attacks.
Proper encoding was essential in preserving data integrity while ensuring that the models could effectively leverage categorical information.

2.2.4 Handling Imbalanced Data
Intrusion detection datasets often exhibit severe class imbalance, where benign traffic instances vastly outnumber malicious ones. Training a model on such imbalanced data could lead to biased predictions, where the classifier favors the majority class. To address this issue, the following techniques were implemented:

Synthetic Minority Over-sampling Technique (SMOTE): Smote was used to generate new instances of underrated attack categories by interpolating existing minority class samples. This helped create a more balanced distribution of classes, improving the model's ability to detect rare attacks.

Class Weight Adjustment: For algorithms that support class weighting (e.g., Random Forest, SVM), inverse weighting was applied to penalize misclassifications of the minority class more heavily, encouraging the model to learn from attack samples.

Undersampling the Majority Class: In addition to oversampling, redundant benign samples were removed to prevent excessive bias towards normal traffic.

By implementing these techniques, the dataset was transformed into a more balanced structure, allowing the models to learn meaningful patterns from both normal and attack traffic without being overwhelmed by the dominant class.

2.3. Machine Learning Models

The anomaly detection system was designed using multiple machine learning models, each evaluated based on its ability to distinguish between normal and attack traffic. A combination of distance-based, probabilistic, tree-based, and margin-based classifiers was tested to assess their effectiveness in capturing patterns indicative of network anomalies. The choice of models was guided by their computational efficiency, interpretability, and suitability for handling high-dimensional network traffic data. The selected models include:

2.3.1 K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN)

K-Nearest Neighbors is a non-parametric, distance-based classifier that identifies anomalies by measuring similarity between data points. The key characteristics of KNN in the anomaly detection system include:

- Anomaly Detection Mechanism: KNN classifies a new data point by analyzing the majority class of its k-nearest neighbors in feature space. Attack instances tend to be farther from normal traffic, making KNN effective in capturing outliers.
- Distance Metric: The Euclidean distance was used to measure closeness between samples, ensuring that network traffic patterns with similar characteristics were grouped together.
- Scalability Considerations: Since KNN requires storing and comparing all data points during classification, it is computationally expensive for large datasets. To optimize performance, approximate nearest neighbor search techniques such as KD-Trees were explored.

2.3.2 Naïve Bayes (NB)

Naïve Bayes is a stochastic classifier based on Bayes' theorem, gaining independence between properties. Despite its simplicity, it is extremely efficient for large classification tasks.

- Fast Computation: Since NB estimates probabilities directly from feature distributions, it requires minimal computational resources, making it suitable for real-time anomaly detection.
- Assumption of Independence: Although network traffic characteristics are often correlated, NB independence acceptance simplifies the classification process and provides strong basic performance.
- Handling of High-Dimensional Data: The model is particularly effective when working with categorical features, such as protocol types and TCP flags, which are common in intrusion detection datasets.

2.3.3 Random Forest (RF)

Random Forest is an ensemble learning method that creates several decision trees to improve classification accuracy and robustness. It is suitable for intrusion detection because it can avoid complex decision-making restrictions.

- Ensemble learning: By aggregating predictions from several decision trees, RF reduces the risk of overadaptation and improves generalization.
- Feature Importance Analysis: RF provides insights into which network attributes contribute most to anomaly detection, aiding in feature selection and interpretability.
- Handling of Missing Data: Unlike many traditional classifiers, RF can handle missing values and noisy data, making it robust against incomplete or imperfect datasets.

2.3.4 Extra Trees Classifier (ETC)

Extra Trees Classifier is a variation of Random Forest that introduces additional randomness in the decision tree construction process.

- Randomized Split Selection: Unlike RF, which selects the best split based on feature importance, ETC chooses split points randomly, increasing diversity in tree structures.
- Higher Speed and Efficiency: Since ETC does not perform an exhaustive search for the best split, it trains faster compared to standard Random Forest models.
- Reduced Variance: The increased randomness helps in reducing model variance, making ETC more resistant to overfitting when compared to conventional decision trees.

2.3.5 Decision Tree (DT)

Decision Trees provide an intuitive and interpretable approach to classifying network traffic anomalies. The model works by recursively splitting data based on feature values until it reaches a final classification decision.

- Simple and Transparent Decision-Making: The tree structure makes it easy to interpret classification rules, which is particularly useful for security analysts.
- Handling of Non-Linear Patterns: DT can capture complex, non-linear decision boundaries in network traffic without requiring extensive feature engineering.
- Prone to Overfitting: Since DTs tend to learn the training data too well, they are often used in ensemble methods like Random Forest to improve robustness.

2.3.6 Support Vector Machine (SVM)

Support Vector Machine is a margin-based classifier that finds the optimal hyperplane for separating benign and attack traffic instances.

- Effective in high-dimensional rooms: SVM works well in scenarios. In this scenario, data cannot be linearly separated by using core elements to convert them to higher dimensions.
- Kernel Trick: Both linear and non-linear kernels (such as Radial Basis Function – RBF) were tested to determine the most effective boundary for classifying anomalies.
- Robust Against Outliers: Since SVM maximizes the margin between classes, it is less sensitive to noisy data points compared to other classifiers. However, training can be computationally expensive for very large datasets.

2.3.7 Model Evaluation and Selection

Each of these models was evaluated based on key performance metrics such as accuracy, accuracy, recall, and F1 scores. Models such as Random Forest and Additional Trees generally provided greater accuracy and interpretability, while SVM and KNN helped identify rare anomalies. Naïve Bayes was computing intensive, but was not very effective for correlated network traffic features.

By leveraging multiple models, the anomaly detection system achieved a balance between accuracy, efficiency, and robustness, ensuring effective classification of network traffic in real-world intrusion detection scenarios.

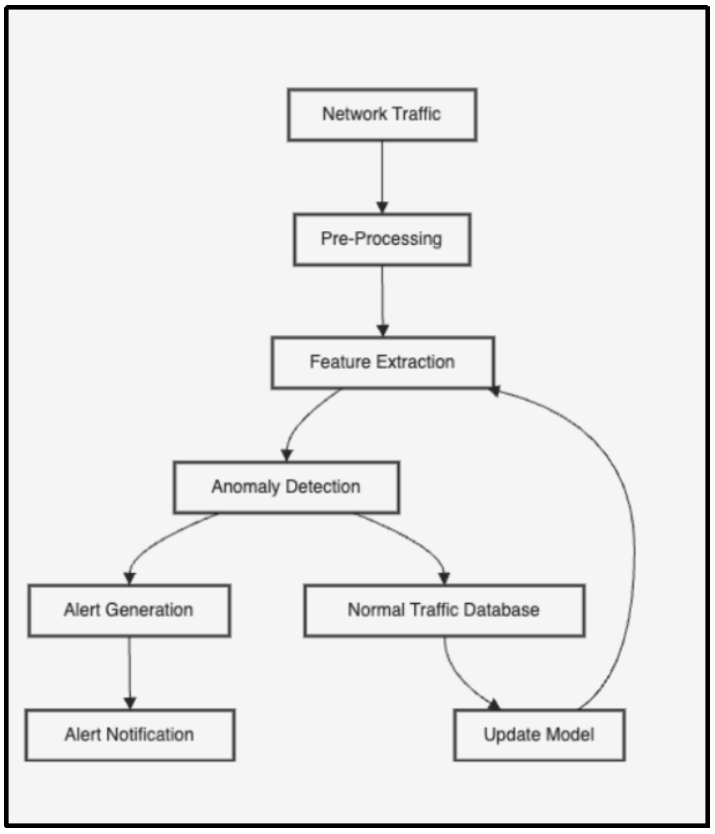

Figure 1. Block Diagram showing NIDS workflow

2.4 Percolation Theory for Anomaly Detection

A novel approach using Percolation Theory was integrated to efficiently prioritize high-risk packets.

2.4.1 Conceptual Framework

Feature Nodes: Each monitored network attribute (e.g., L7_PROTO, TCP_FLAGS) is treated as a node in a percolation model.

Threshold-Based Detection: A percolation event occurs when the frequency of a feature surpasses a predefined statistical threshold.

2.4.2 Mathematical Model

The application of penetration theory to network expression detection is based on the identification of clusters of abnormal behavior in network traffic. In this approach, we

treat specific network features as "nodes" and monitor the occurrence of their values within defined time windows. When these occurrences exceed a predefined threshold, a "percolation event" is detected, indicating a potential anomaly.

Step 1: Defining Feature Nodes and Counts

Each monitored network feature can be considered a node, and the frequency of each feature's values within a time window can be treated as a random variable. For this implementation, we choose the following features:

L7_PROTO (Layer 7 Protocol): Represents different application-layer protocols (e.g., HTTP, FTP).

TCP_FLAGS: Represents different TCP flag combinations, such as SYN, ACK, or FIN.

FLOW_DURATION_MILLISECONDS: Represents the duration of each network flow in milliseconds, which can be grouped into ranges (e.g., short, medium, long).

For each time window t, let:

X_L7_PROTO be the count of specific protocols,X_TCP_FLAGS be the count of specific TCP flag combinations,$X\_FLOW\_DURATION$ is the count of flow durations within specific ranges.These counts represent the occurrences of each feature within a time window, capturing activity clusters that may signal anomalies.

Step 2: Establishing Percolation Thresholds

For each feature, we define a percolation threshold TTT based on normal network behavior, which can be determined through historical analysis or baseline statistics. These thresholds signify the maximum expected count of each feature under normal conditions:

T_L7_PROTO: Threshold for protocol counts.

T_TCP_FLAGS: Threshold for TCP flag combinations.
$T\_FLOW\_DURATION$: Threshold for flow duration ranges.

The thresholds serve as limits; if the count of a feature within a given time window exceeds its threshold, it indicates a potential anomaly.

Step 3: Mathematical Model for Percolation and Anomaly Detection

To detect anomalies, we evaluate when the feature counts exceed their respective thresholds. If any feature's count surpasses its threshold, we detect a percolation event, indicating a potential anomaly.

- Assuming the feature counts are Poisson-distributed (a common model for rare events in fixed intervals), we can calculate the probability mass function (PMF) for each feature count X with mean λ:

$$P(X = k) = \frac{\lambda^k e^{-\lambda}}{k!}$$

- where λ is the average count of the feature under normal conditions.

- e is the mathematical constant approximately equal to 2.71828. It's the base of the natural logarithm and appears frequently in probability and statistics, particularly in models involving exponential growth or decay, such as the Poisson distribution.

- k represents the number of occurrences of the event you're measuring within the time interval. It's the specific value for which you want to calculate the probability (e.g., if k =3, it would mean you're calculating the probability that the event occurs exactly three times).

- To assess the probability of a percolation event (an anomaly), we calculate the likelihood that X exceeds the threshold T :

$$P(X > T) = 1 - F_x(T)$$

-where F x (T) is the cumulative distribution function (CDF) for up to , defined as:

$$F_x(T) = \sum_{k=0}^{T} \frac{\lambda^k e^{-\lambda}}{k!}$$

If $P(X > T)$ is significant (i.e., above a chosen confidence level), it signals a percolation event for that feature.

Step 4: Adjusting Thresholds Using Confidence Intervals

To refine thresholds, we can adjust them based on confidence intervals, especially if feature counts exhibit variability. Assuming the counts follow a normal distribution, we can set the threshold T using a confidence interval :

$$T = \mu + z \bullet \sigma$$

where the mean, is the standard deviation of counts, and is the z-score for the desired confidence level (e.g., z =1.96 for a 95% confidence level).

Step 5: Percolation Check and Anomaly Detection

For each time window *(t*), we calculate feature counts and compare them against their thresholds:

· If X_L7_PROTO > T_L7_PROTO, a percolation event is detected for the L7 protocol.

· If X_TCP_FLAGS > T_TCP_FLAGS, a percolation event is detected for TCP flags.

· If X_FLOW_DURATION > T_FLOW_DURATION, a percolation event is detected for flow durations.

An anomaly is flagged if any of the following conditions hold: X_L7_PROTO > T_L7_PROTO, or X_TCP_FLAGS > T_TCP_FLAGS, or X_FLOW_DURATION > T_FLOW_DURATION.

Step 6: Summary of Percolation-Based Anomaly Detection

To summarize, our anomaly detection system identifies potential intrusions based on percolation theory, which detects abnormal clusters of network activity:

1. Calculate feature counts (X_L7_PROTO, X_TCP_FLAGS, X_FLOW_DURATION) within a time window (*t*).

2. Compare each count to its corresponding threshold (T_L7_PROTO, T_TCP_FLAGS, T_FLOW_DURATION).

3. Flag an anomaly if any feature's count exceeds its threshold, indicating a percolation event.

By defining and monitoring these thresholds, we effectively identify unusual concentrations of activity, signaling potential network intrusions.

2.5. Implementation and Real-Time Detection

The proposed intrusion detection system (IDS) was implemented using a combination of real-time packet capture, a structured detection pipeline, and a visualization and alert system. The following sections outline the key components of the implementation process.

2.5.1 Real-Time Packet Capture

To monitor network traffic in real time, we employed various packet-sniffing tools such as Scapy, PyShark, and tcpdump. These tools enabled live packet collection, which was essential for detecting anomalies as they occurred.

- Scapy is a powerful Python-based tool that allows for packet manipulation, capture, and analysis at a granular level. It was used for extracting packet headers and payload data.
- PyShark, a Python wrapper for Wireshark's packet capturing capabilities, was utilized to decode network traffic and extract protocol-specific details.
- tcpdump, a command-line tool, was employed for lightweight packet capture, particularly in Linux environments, to ensure minimal system overhead while monitoring traffic.

The captured packets were preprocessed by removing redundant or unnecessary data, normalizing feature values, and handling missing values. This preprocessing step ensured that the data was in a suitable format for analysis and classification.

2.5.2 Detection Pipeline

The recognition pipeline was developed to efficiently filter, analyze and classify network traffic based on predefined risk levels. This consisted of the following important phases:

Feature Extraction:
Source/destination - Package tributes such as IP, port number, protocol type, payload size, timestamp, flags etc have been extracted. These characteristics were chosen for their importance in identifying suspicious activity such as unexpected port access and unusually high traffic rates.

Percolation-Based Filtering:
A filtering mechanism was implemented to prioritize high-risk packets while ignoring low-risk ones. This step helped reduce the computational burden and allowed the system to focus on potential security threats. The filtering process included:

- Identifying abnormal traffic spikes.
- Filtering out benign and known safe packets based on historical data.
- Prioritizing traffic with anomalous patterns for deeper analysis.

Machine Learning Classification:
The processed packets were passed through a machine learning model trained to classify network traffic as either benign or anomalous. The classification model used features derived from real-time packet data and previous attack patterns. Common algorithms used for this task included:

- Random Forest: Used for its high accuracy and ability to handle imbalanced data.
- Support Vector Machine (SVM): Effective in identifying complex decision boundaries between normal and malicious traffic.
- Neural Networks: Leveraged for deep learning-based anomaly detection when sufficient training data was available.

Based on the classification results, packets flagged as anomalies were forwarded to the alert system for immediate action.

2.5.3 Visualization and Alert System

To enhance the interpretability and usability of the intrusion detection system, real-time monitoring dashboards were developed using Grafana and Kibana. These tools provided visual insights into network activity, helping security analysts quickly detect and respond to potential threats.

- Grafana was used to create interactive dashboards displaying real-time traffic trends, anomaly detection rates, and system performance metrics.
- Kibana, integrated with the ELK (Elasticsearch, Logstash, Kibana) stack, was employed for log analysis and pattern detection in network traffic.

A color-coded alert system was implemented to indicate the severity of detected threats:

- Green: Normal network traffic, no immediate action required.
- Yellow: Suspicious activity detected, requiring further investigation.
- Red: High-risk anomaly detected, necessitating an immediate security response.

These alerts were sent to administrators via email or integrated into existing Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) systems for automated threat response.

2.6. Model Evaluation and Performance Metrics

To assess the effectiveness of the machine learning models used in the IDS, various performance metrics were employed:

- Accuracy: Measure the overall model modification by calculating packages with correctly classifying the ratio for the total number of packages analyzed.Higher accuracy indicates a well-trained model with minimal false predictions.
- Precision: Determines the proportion of true positive anomalies among all packets classified as anomalies. A high precision score ensures that detected threats are indeed malicious, reducing false alarms.
- Recall (Sensitivity): Measures the model's ability to identify actual security threats. A high recall score indicates that the system successfully detects most real anomalies, minimizing the chances of undetected attacks.
- F1-Score: Recall and balance both metrics to represent a harmonious average of accuracy and provide a more comprehensive assessment of the power of the

model. This is especially useful in scenarios where false positives and false negative results are incorrect.

These evaluation metrics were computed using cross-validation techniques and tested on a labeled dataset containing both benign and malicious network traffic patterns.

2.7. Software and Hardware Requirements

The successful deployment of the intrusion detection system required specific software tools and hardware configurations to ensure efficient data processing and model execution.

2.7.1 Software Requirements

The system was developed and tested using the following software:

- Programming Language: Python 3.x (for model implementation and data processing).
- Development Environment: Jupyter Notebook (for exploratory data analysis and model training).
- Machine Learning Libraries:
  - TensorFlow (for deep learning-based classification).
  - Scikit-learn (for classical machine learning algorithms such as SVM and Random Forest).
- Packet Analysis Tools:
  - Scapy (for low-level packet manipulation and feature extraction).
  - PyShark (for protocol-specific traffic analysis).
- Visualization and Monitoring Tools:
  - Grafana (for real-time traffic monitoring and dashboard creation).
  - Kibana (for log analysis and SIEM integration).

2.7.2 Hardware Requirements

To handle real-time network monitoring and machine learning inference, the system was deployed on high-performance hardware with the following minimum specifications:

- Operating System: Windows, macOS, or Linux (preferably Ubuntu for optimal compatibility with network monitoring tools).
- Processor: Intel Core i7 or higher (to support intensive packet processing and model execution).
- RAM: At least 16GB (to handle large volumes of real-time traffic data efficiently).

- Storage: 1TB SSD (to store logs, model checkpoints, and captured network data).
- GPU (Optional): NVIDIA GPU recommended for accelerating deep learning-based anomaly detection models.

By ensuring compatibility with these hardware and software requirements, the intrusion detection system was capable of operating in real-time while maintaining high accuracy and performance.

3. Results

3.1. Analysis

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of Final Results

Metric	Class 0	Class 1	Accuracy	Marco Avg	Weighted Avg
Precision	0.97	0.99	-	0.98	0.98
Recall	0.97	0.98	-	0.98	0.98
F1-Score	0.97	0.98	-	0.98	0.98
Support	25165295	50822681	-	75987976	75987976
Accuracy	-	-	0.98	-	-

Table 2. Feature Importance Ranking

Rank	Feature	Importance
1	L7_PROTO	0.235952
2	FLOW_DURATION_MILLISECONDS	0.186825
3	MAX_IP_PKT_LEN	0.165045
4	L4_SRC_PORT	0.144517
5	MIN_IP_PKT_LEN	0.093933
6	TCP_FLAGS	0.046039
7	TCP_WIN_MAX_OUT	0.044590
8	CLIENT_TCP_FLAGS	0.043210
9	SERVER_TCP_FLAGS	0.029883
10	RETRANSMITTED_OUT_PKTS	0.011005

3.2 Intrusion Detection System

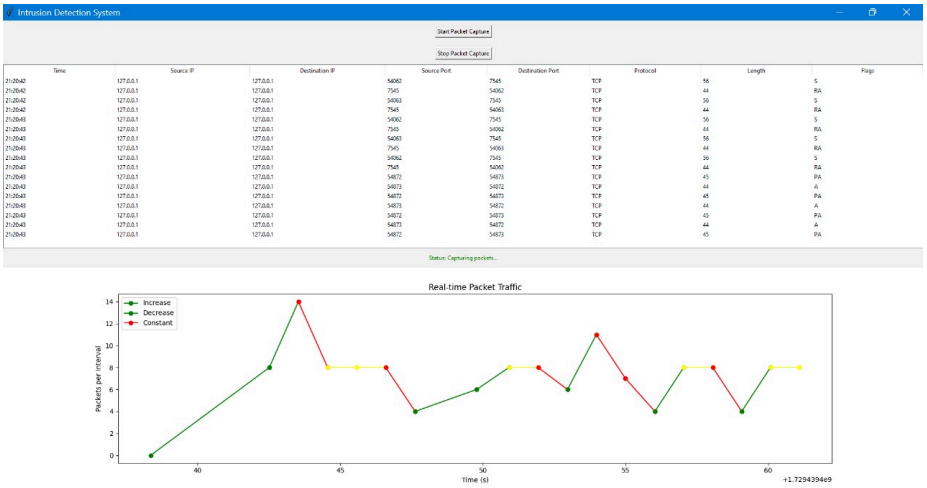

Figure 2. Packet Capture Interface

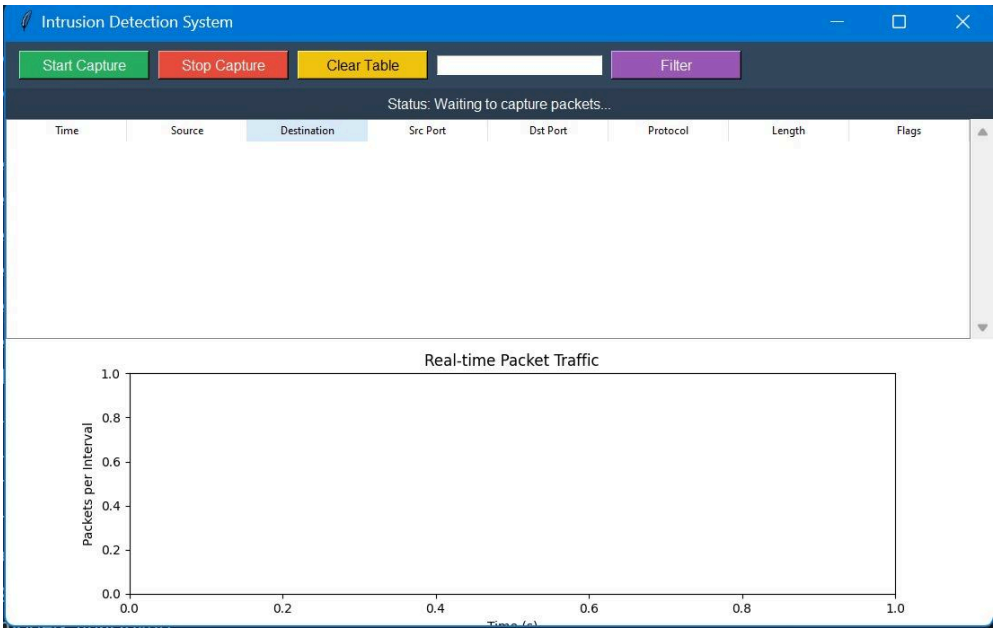

Figure 3. Before starting the capture

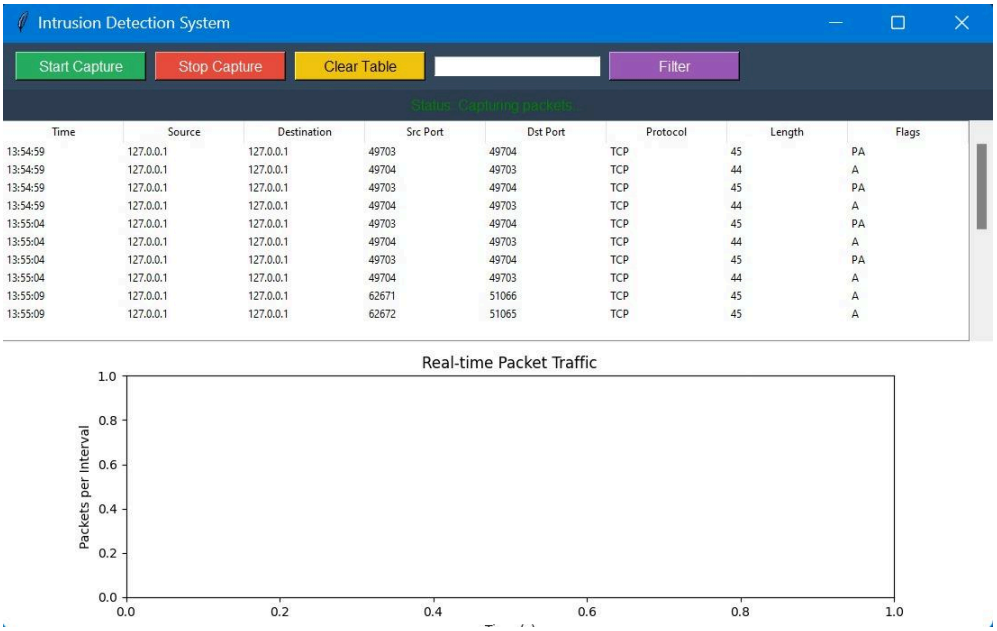

Figure 4. After capture starts.

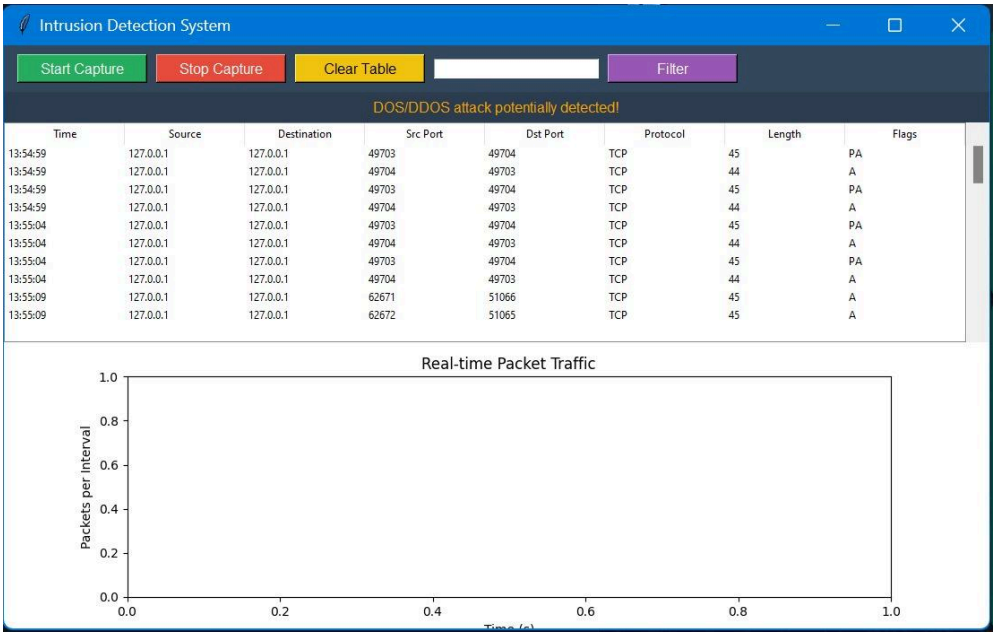

Figure 5. Detection of DDOS/DOS

3.2.1. Top Section: Network Traffic Table

The top section of the IDS interface displays real-time network traffic data in a tabular format. The table includes the following columns:

- Time: Indicates when a packet was captured.
- Source IP: The originating IP address of the packet. In this case, all packets originate from 127.0.0.1 (localhost).
- Destination IP: The target IP address. Here, all packets are sent to 127.0.0.1.
- Source Port and Destination Port: Represent the ports associated with the source and destination.
- Protocol: Specifies the network protocol used; in this instance, it is TCP.
- Length: Displays the packet size.
- Flags: Shows TCP flags, such as:
  - S (SYN): Indicates a connection request.
  - RA (RST-ACK): Represents a reset and acknowledgment.
  - PA (Push-ACK): Denotes a push and acknowledgment.

3.2.2. Control Buttons

The interface includes two primary buttons for managing packet capture:

- Start Packet Capture: Begins real-time packet capture.
- Stop Packet Capture: Halts the packet capture process.

3.2.3. Status Section

This section provides real-time status updates on the IDS system. For example, it may display messages such as "Capturing packets..." to indicate active monitoring.

3.2.4. Bottom Section: Real-Time Graph

A real-time graphical representation of packet traffic is displayed in the bottom section. The graph consists of:

- X-Axis: Represents time in seconds.
- Y-Axis: Displays the number of packets per interval.
- Color Indicators:
  - Green: Signifies an increase in packet traffic.
  - Red: Indicates a decrease in traffic.
  - Yellow: Represents constant traffic levels.

This graph aids in monitoring network trends and detecting any unusual traffic patterns, which could be indicative of security threats.

3.3 Prediction Results

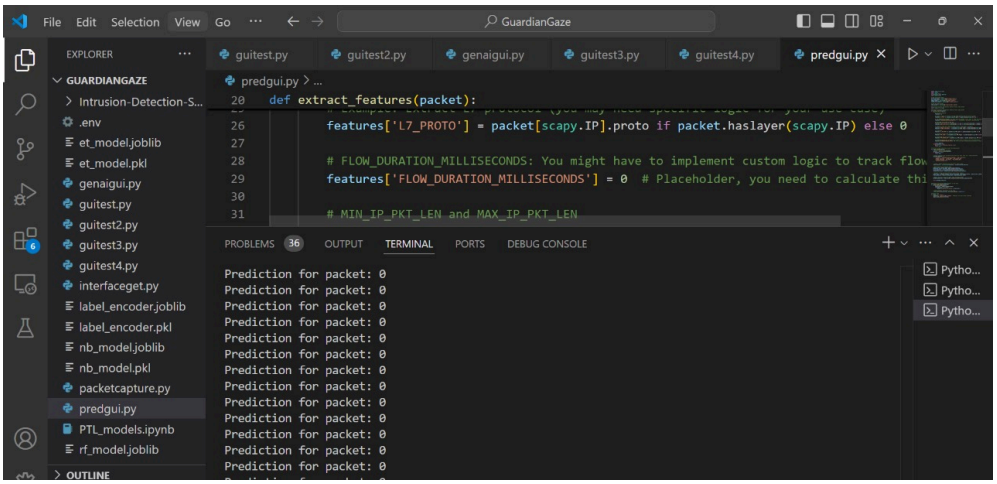

Figure 6. Prediction Output

The model is predicting all packets as benign (0), indicating that no intrusions were detected. This could mean the traffic is normal, or the model is biased towards predicting benign due to unbalanced training or insufficient feature extraction. Testing with intrusion data and refining features can verify and improve its detection accuracy.

In the output, a prediction of 1 indicates that the system is aware of penetrating or malicious activity in network traffic. In contrast to 0 representing benign (normal) traffic, predictions indicate potential safety threats such as permitted access, malware, or abnormal behavior within the network.

4. Conclusions

Finally, the AI Improvement Project (AI Improved Network Intrusion Detection System) (NIDS) is a significant advance in cybersecurity, with the latest network technology being used in modern machine learning. By leveraging models such as KNN, Naive Bayes, Random Forest, and Decision Trees, along with the powerful NF-UQ-NIDS-v2 dataset, we have successfully

developed a robust system capable of detecting anomalies and preventing potential threats in real-time.

The integration of visualization tools like Grafana and Kibana enhances the system's usability by providing clear, actionable insights into network traffic, allowing for immediate responses to detected intrusions. Our use of Scapy and PyShark for traffic analysis, combined with the preprocessing power of NumPy and Pandas, further reinforces the system's efficiency in handling large volumes of data.

This project underscores the potential of machine learning in revolutionizing cybersecurity frameworks. The inclusion of tools such as TensorFlow, Keras, and Scikit-learn enables the creation of adaptable models that continuously learn and evolve to combat emerging cyber threats. By applying these technologies, we have built a scalable, adaptive, and proactive NIDS system, capable of protecting critical infrastructures in an increasingly connected world.

As we continue to refine and optimize this system, we remain dedicated to enhancing network security, ensuring that our solution evolves alongside the ever-growing complexity of cyberattacks. This project not only demonstrates our commitment to developing advanced cybersecurity solutions but also marks a pivotal step toward a more secure digital future for organizations and individuals alike.

Availability of data and material

Dataset used was accessed from publicly accessible website (https://staff.itee.uq.edu.au/marius/NIDS_datasets/#RA1) . Other data and materials are contained within the article.

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Funding

Not applicable.

Acknowledgement

Not applicable.