Source code obfuscation by mean of evolutionary algorithms
Sébastien Martinez

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SOURCE CODE OBFUSCATION BY MEAN OF EVOLUTIONARY ALGORITHMS

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Internship report
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Abstract

Usually, when talking about security, the matter is about protecting a computer from intrusions or malicious software. Software obfuscation allows to protect software from piracy by making it able to run without letting the user know its composition. To achieve this goal, distributing binaries instead of source code is not enough since debuggers and decompilers can be used to help get the secret algorithm or data structure one does not want to be known by the user. The solution would be having code that is impossible to understand for the user, but since this goal cannot be reached, the code will have to be complicated enough so that users wanting to get secret algorithms will either give up, either obtain the algorithm when it is obsolete (e.g. when a new, better version is available).

Unlike regular compilation, a good obfuscated program cannot be obtained by applying a fixed sequence of transformation to the given original program. One has to find the sequence of transformations that fits the given program. In this context, the SHADOBF framework has been designed. Based on Evolutionary Algorithms (EAs), SHADOBF is used to find that sequence of transformation for any given program written in C. More precisely, extensions calculating obfuscations complexities have been added to the source-to-source compiler PipS, obfuscating transformations were selected and the NSGA-II was implemented in order to optimize the six obfuscation complexities of programs.

The conducted validations showed that using Multi Objective Evolutionary Algorithms (MOEAs) to optimize all the obfuscation metrics gives better obfuscated programs than using single objective EAs to optimize one obfuscation metric. They also showed that considering the execution time of the program as a fitness parameter for the EAs helps obtaining an obfuscated program whose execution time is kept reasonable despite the obfuscating transformations that were applied to it.

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1 Introduction

Source code obfuscation is the action of deliberately making a program's source code non-understandable in some sense, with the constraint that the obtained program will produce the same results as the non-obfuscated program for any given input. Its main purpose is to protect the software from malicious users, e.g. a company selling a software using a cutting edge algorithm would not like to have its competitors getting the algorithm by just buying their software. A program's obfuscated source code is the consequence of applying a sequence of transformations on its source code. In this sense, the obfuscation process is similar to the one of a source to source compiler.

Just like the sequence of transformation needs to be adapted to a given program to produce an optimized code, the obfuscation process needs to select dynamically a set of transformation, applied in a given order to produce an optimally obfuscated program. In the case of optimizing the generated code for a given execution platform, the metric that can be used to evaluate a given candidate is easy: the execution time on the platform. In the context of obfuscating a source code, this evaluation is more complex. We have identified six metrics in this context: the program length, the cyclomatic complexity, the nesting complexity, the data flow complexity, the fan-in/fan-out complexity and the data structure complexity. Each of these metrics qualify different aspects of the program, and combined together, they can give a fairly accurate quantification of a program obfuscation.

In the case of "standard" source to source compilation, the use of Evolutionary Algorithm (EA) to find the optimal sequence of transformations for a given program is possible, the goal being to reduce the execution time of the program. The same work can be done to find the optimal sequence of obfuscating transformation that would increase the six metrics listed above. EAs are used to solve an optimization problem and can give good results in less time than more deterministic algorithms. The main principle of evolutionary algorithms is to generate a population of solutions and to compare them to choose the best individuals that will be mutated or recombined to form a new population, continuing until an optimal solution is found.

This internship report presents the work that has been done in the context of the SHADOBF project in the Faculty of Sciences, Technologies and Communications in the University of Luxembourg. The goal of this project is to perform a Multi Objective Optimization to find the sequence of obfuscating transformations that will optimize the six obfuscations metrics for a given program.

This report is organized as follows: an a first step, the tools and the algorithms used in this project are presented in §2. For instance, an overview of EAs, projPips, but also of obfuscation techniques and of classical compiler transformations is proposed. Then, the section 3 details the implementation operated within the SHADOBF project. §4 is dedicated to the validation of this work on a concrete program, namely a matrix multiplication application. The results given in this section are promising and demonstrate the potential of the proposed approach. We found interesting to present the problems met during this internship, together with a justification of the choices made. This is the purpose of the section 5. §6 expound the seen perspectives while the section 7 conclude this work.

2 Context and motivations

2.1 The University of Luxembourg

This internship took place in the University of Luxembourg (UL) which was founded in 2003, in the Computer Science and Communications (CSC) department. Many countries are represented among the members of this department, contributing to multilingual and multicultural exchanges. This project was conducted under the supervision of Dr S. Varrette, scientific collaborator at the UL and B. Bertholon, PhD student at the UL.

The CSC department is currently the largest research unit of the University of Luxembourg, its staff includes 22 professors and associate-professors, 11 scientific support staff members, 25 post-doc researchers and scientific collaborators and 40 PhD students. The research fields of the department range from the investigation of the theoretical foundations to the development of interdisciplinary applications.
The University of Luxembourg owns 3 clusters: Gaia, Chaos and Granduc, representing 151 nodes, 1556 cores and 14.26 TFlops. The last one is part of the project French Grid5000 which is a scientific instrument for the study of large scale parallel and distributed systems. These clusters have been used for the validation of this project.

2.2 Project objective

Our objective is to optimize the obfuscation of programs written in C using Evolutionary Algorithms (EAs). We use the source-to-source compiler PIPS for static analysis of programs and for applying transformations on source code. In order to quantify the obfuscation level of a source code, we use six obfuscation metrics detailed in §3.1: the program length, the cyclomatic complexity, the nesting complexity, the data flow complexity, the fan-in/fan-out complexity and the data structure complexity. The figure 1 illustrates the evolutionary process of obfuscation optimization. We now review the basic concepts used throughout this project.

2.3 Evolutionary Algorithms (EAs)

EAs use mechanisms inspired from the Darwinian theory of evolution to solve optimization problems by the mean of reproduction, mutation, recombination and selection. EAs involve generations of individuals, each individual being a potential solution of the problem to solve. Each generation is built from the previous one through mutation, recombination ... Then, the individuals are evaluated according to a fitness function which eventually involves multiple criterias. The algorithm halts when a stopping condition is met (typically, the fitness value has reached a given threshold or an optimal solution has been found). Note that the convergence of EAs towards "good" solutions has been formally proven in [10]. Since the convergence of an EA can very be long one can chose to stop an EA when a fixed number of generation have been computed or when the fitness of the individuals does not change much between two consecutive generations.
2.3 Evolutionary Algorithms (EAs)  

Algorithm 1: General scheme of an EA.

\[
\begin{align*}
t &:= 0; \\
\text{Generation}(X_t) &\quad // \text{generate the initial population} \\
\text{Evaluation}(X_t) &\quad // \text{evaluate population} \\
\text{while Stopping criteria not satisfied do} \\
\quad &\quad \hat{X}_t = \text{ParentsSelection}(X_t); \quad // \text{select parents} \\
\quad &\quad X'_t = \text{Modification}(\hat{X}_t); \quad // \text{cross-over + mutation} \\
\quad &\quad \text{Evaluation}(X'_t) \quad // \text{evaluate offspring} \\
\quad &\quad X_{t+1} = \text{Selection}(X_t, X'_t) \quad // \text{select survivors for the next generation} \\
\quad t &:= t + 1;
\end{align*}
\]

For single criteria based evolution, a simple EA was implemented. Its follows the general scheme presented in algorithm 1.

**EA components in Shadobf**

The EAs used in the SHADOBF project are formalized as follows.

**Individual**: An individual is a source code composed of modules (i.e. functions).

**Original individual**: The very first individual (from which all the individuals were mutated) which derives from the original source code we would like to obfuscate.

**Degenerate individual**: A degenerate individual is either an invalid individual (see Validation of individuals) or an individual whose source code cannot be compiled.

**Population**: A set of individuals

**Mutation**: A mutation is a sequence of transformations applied to a module of an individual. It produces a new offspring whose parent is the latter individual.

**Selection**: selection of individuals to form a new parent population that will produce a new children population through mutation. Depending on the used EA, individuals can by sorted by their fitness or by their domination rang (see NSGA-II Algorithm).

**Validation of individuals**: Every generated individual has to give the same output as the original individual for the given input. The validation of individuals is made by compiling them and running them on a predefined benchmark. Individuals whose output differs from the one given by the original individual and those whose execution time is considered too long are said invalid individuals. Note that as the benchmark does not obviously cover all possible input values, a valid individual may still be degenerate for some specific input such that we denote here a probabilistic validity.

**Evaluation of individuals / fitness**: The quantification of the quality of an individual. In this context, the quality of individuals is quantifies by their obfuscation complexity.

Note that cross-over is not considered in our work as we didn’t find a satisfiable way to perform this evolutionary operation without degrading the obfuscation capability of our algorithm\(^1\).

**The NSGA-II Algorithm**

Simple EAs cannot handle fitness composed of multiple criteria, the main problem being to sort a newly formed generation. Therefore, one has to use specific algorithm handling multiple criteria. These algorithms are called Multi Objective Evolutionary Algorithms (MOEAs) and the reference algorithm

\(^1\)More precisely, a cross-over assumes a shared (common) pattern between the individuals.
in this context is NSGA-II [5]. This algorithm is an enhancement of the NSGA algorithm introducing elitism and reducing the complexity of the algorithm from $O(mN^3)$ to $O(mN^2)$ where $N$ is the size of the population and $m$ is the number of criteria. The side effect of this acceleration is the increasing of the storage from $O(N)$ to $O(N^2)$.

The order relation mainly used in Multi Objective Evolutionary Algorithms (MOEAs) is the domination relation. Assuming that the objective values to optimize belongs to $\mathbb{R}$, the fitness values of a given individual form a vector in $\mathbb{R}^n$. The domination relation forms a partial order on $\mathbb{R}^n$. In our case, the objectives (obfuscation complexities, execution time) are real numbers.

**Definition 1 (Domination).** An vector $x$ of $\mathbb{R}^n$ dominates a vector $y$ of $\mathbb{R}^n$ if and only if $\exists i$ such that $x_i < y_i$ and $x_j \leq y_j \forall j \in [0..n-1]$

The NSGA-II algorithm uses Pareto fronts to sort the individuals of a generation. Pareto fronts are sorted by rank: $F_1$ is the set of the individuals that are not dominated by any other individual, $F_n$ is the set of the individuals that are dominated by exactly $n-1$ other individuals. In order to evaluate the density of solutions around a given point a crowding distance is calculated for each individual (or point) then the individuals are sorted according to the crowded comparison. The crowding distance of an individual estimates the distance between this individual and its closer neighbors.

**Algorithm 2:** Computing the crowding distance of individuals.

$S = \text{set of individuals}$  
$l = \text{size of } S$

**for each criteria do**

  sort $S$ according to the criteria
  $S[1] = S[l] = \infty$
  $f_{\text{min}} = \text{minimum value of criteria}$
  $f_{\text{max}} = \text{maximum value of criteria}$

  **for** $i = 2 \text{ to } (l-1)$ **do**

    $S[i]_{\text{distance}} = S[i]_{\text{distance}} + (S[i+1]\text{[criteria]} - S[i-1]\text{[criteria]})/(f_{\text{max}} - f_{\text{min}})$

**Definition 2 (Crowded Comparison).** Let $\geq$ be the operator of crowded comparison and $i$ and $j$ individuals. $i \geq j$ if and only if $(i_{\text{rank}} < j_{\text{rank}}) \text{or} ((i_{\text{rank}} = j_{\text{rank}}) \text{and} (i_{\text{crowdingdistance}} > j_{\text{crowdingdistance}}))$

**Remark :** The rank of an individual is the rank of the Pareto front it is in

When the individuals of a generation have been sorted, a children generation of the same size is built from that generation (called the parent generation) and the union of these two generations is sorted to create the next parent generation. The NSGA-II algorithm replaces the sorting method used in the Selection step in the algorithm detailed on algorithm 1 by its own method implying Pareto fronts.

**Related work**

Guelton and Varrette used EAs to optimize source code in [6], the fitness being the execution time. They used Pips for applying transformations on the source code and developed pypsearch in this context. Comparing the results brought by the evolutionary approach (compared to a complete approach and a glutton approach), they found that the evolutionary approach gave an optimal result like the complete approach in times comparable to the glutton approach that was unable to give an optimal result. This work makes use of the same idea yet on a different objective: rather than optimizing the code for an efficient execution on a given computing platform, we try here to obfuscate it. To make this last notion more clear, the next section provides an overview of the main obfuscating techniques.

### 2.4 Obfuscation techniques

Obfuscation transformations can take many forms, and can affect many parts of a program: the data structures used, the functions called or even the textual representation of the source code (e.g. Removing
is said a potent obfuscating transformation of Programmer Eort produced. Resilience takes two parameters in consideration: pictured as a measure of a transformation usefulness toward human readers. It is defined as:

\[ \text{Res}(\tau_{\text{Deobfuscator\ Effort}}, \tau_{\text{Programmer\ Effort}}) \]

where Res, the Resilience is the function defined by the matrix defined in the matrix in Figure 2.

\[ \tau_{\text{pot}}(P) = E(P')/E(P) - 1 \]

\[ \tau \text{ is said a potent obfuscating transformation if } \tau_{\text{pot}}(P) > 0. \]

In this definition E a measure of complexity. Since there are many software complexity measures, one has to be chosen. Several metrics will be listed in the next subsection.

Software complexity metrics are often subjective and some transformation will increase the program complexity according to the metric in use while the deobfuscation of these transformations are really simple for a machine though uneasy for a human reader as we will see further. Hence, potency can be pictured as a measure of a transformation usefulness toward human readers.

To measure a transformation usefulness toward automatic deobfuscators, resilience has to be introduced. Resilience takes two parameters in consideration: Programmer Effort (the amount of time taken to build an automatic deobfuscator that will efficiently reduce the potency of \( \tau \)) and Deobfuscator Effort (the execution time and the memory space required by the obfuscator to reduce efficiently the potency of \( \tau \)).
2.5 Classical compiler transformations

Transformations often introduce some loss in the program. The program can need more memory space or more time to terminate after the application of a transformation. Transformation cost introduces this notion.

**Definition 6 (Transformation Cost).** Let $\tau$ be a behavior-conserving transformation, such that $P \xrightarrow{\tau} P'$. $\tau$ transforms a source program $P$ into a target program $P'$. $\tau_{\text{cost}}(P)$ is the extra execution time/space of $P'$ compared to $P$. $\tau_{\text{cost}}(P)$ is said:

- dear if executing $P'$ requires exponentially more resources than $P$
- costly if executing $P'$ requires $O(n^p), p > 1$, more resources than $P$
- cheap if executing $P'$ requires $O(n)$ more resources than $P$
- free if executing $P'$ requires $O(1)$ more resources than $P$

Potency, resilience and cost compose the quality metric of obfuscating transformations.

**Definition 7 (Transformation quality).** $\tau_{\text{qual}}(P)$, the quality of a transformation $\tau$, is defined as the combination of the potency, resilience, and cost of $\tau$

$$\tau_{\text{qual}}(P) = (\tau_{\text{pot}}(P), \tau_{\text{res}}(P), \tau_{\text{cost}}(P))$$

## 2.5 Classical compiler transformations

Pips provides several transformations aiming to optimize the parallelism of a source code. Some of these transformations can be used as obfuscating transformations. In this context, the following transformations have been selected:

- **Loop unrolling**: Unrolls a loop by a given rate, reducing its range.
- **Inlining**: Replaces a function call by the function content
- **Localize declarations**: Relocate variable declarations the closer possible to their usage.
- **Outlining**: Replaces a block of code by a call to a function that executes this block (defines this function if needed).
**2.6 The Shadobf project**

The Shadobf project makes use of Pips for static analysis of programs and applying transformations to it. The choice for the compiler to use was between the Clang fronted for the LLVM compiler and the source-to-source compiler Pips. Pips was chosen because of my past experience with this software and its development team. Moreover, Pips brought Pyps (its Python frontend), transformations and pypsearch (a Pyps library for using genetic algorithms with Pips) that were already implemented and this greatly facilitate the running of this internship toward concrete results.

### 2.6.1 Pips and its frontend Pyps

Pips [1] (*Parallelisation Interprocédurale de Programmes Scientifiques*) is an interprocedural source to source compiler analyzing C and Fortran programs and transforming them to optimize parallel executions of these programs. Hence, the purpose of many of Pips transformations is to accelerate loop executions. This can be achieved for instance by including OpenMP pragmas or replacing some operations by SSE instructions. However, some of Pips transformations can be used for obfuscation like loop unrolling or function inlining. A Pips process involves several passes each of them responsible for a given transformation. For a given program, its functions are called modules.

Pips passes are called through its Python front-end Pyps. Pyps is linked to Pips using swig [3] and its design is object oriented and modular. The workspace object models a program and offers special functionalities. Different types of workspaces are available in Pyps, each one offering different functionalities (e.g. benchmarking modules).

More details on Pips will be provided in §3.3.1.

### 2.6.2 Pypsearch

Pypsearch is a Pyps module which implements searching algorithms for automatic optimisation of programs execution time using Pips. Among the searching algorithms, a single criteria genetic algorithm has been implemented. Pypsearch uses Remote Procedure Calls to handle several workspaces (and therefore several individuals) at a time. Other details on Pypsearch will be given in §3.3.2.

### 2.6.3 Shadobf

Due to the previous work with Pips and Genetic Algorithms in the framework of [6], Pips has been chosen for syntax analysis, obfuscation complexities computing and most importantly, for applying in a flexible way the transformations on the source code, hence the choice to work on programs written in C. Moreover, several passes dedicated to the previous work on code optimization that were already implemented in Pips like outlining or loop unrolling happen to have a fairly good obfuscating power.

The six most common obfuscation metrics (Summarized bellow) listed by Colberg et al. [4] have different semantical meaning and one cannot simply chose only one of these metrics to quantify the obfuscation of a program. Therefore, Shadobf implements Multi Objective Evolutionary Algorithms (MOEAs) in order to optimize the obfuscation of programs along the six main obfuscation metrics.

**$\mu_1$ Halstead’s complexity (Program length):** the $\mu_1$ complexity of a program is the number of operator and operands of its source code.
3 IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS

\(\mu_2\) MacCabe’s complexity (Cyclomatic Complexity): the \(\mu_2\) of a program is the number of predicates in its source code.

\(\mu_3\) Nesting complexity: the \(\mu_3\) of a program is the maximum nesting depth of the predicates in its source code.

\(\mu_4\) Data flow complexity: the \(\mu_4\) of a block is the number of variable that are used but not declared in this block. The \(\mu_4\) of a program is the sum of the \(\mu_4\) of its blocks.

\(\mu_5\) Fan-in/out complexity: the fan-out of a function is the number of its write effects plus the number of functions called by that function. The fan-in of a function is the number of read effects plus the number of function that call that function. The \(\mu_5\) of a function is the product of its fan-in by its fan-out. The \(\mu_5\) of a program is the sum of the \(\mu_5\) of its functions.

\(\mu_6\) Data structure complexity: the \(\mu_6\) of a program is the sum of the size of its variables.

Increasing a program’s obfuscation often comes along with increasing the program’s execution time. For instance, the outlining transformations will increase the number of function calls, increasing the execution time of the program. On the other hand, applying transformations chosen at random generation after generation might create degenerate individuals that would not give the same output as the original individual when given the same input or that would simply crash while running. The goal being to obtain an optimal individual giving the exact same output as the original one within an execution time reasonably increased, the degenerate individuals must be removed and replaced by new ones so do the individuals whose execution time is too long.

The development operated on this project used to comprise three major steps:

1. Implementing passes computing the obfuscation complexities in Pips
2. Selecting Pips transformations that could be used to increase a program’s obfuscation
3. Writing a Python program using Pyps and implementing the evolutionary algorithms we want to experiment

3 Implementation details

3.1 Implementing the Metrics

For each one of the six obfuscation metrics, a dedicated pass was added in Pips. Each one of these passes computes an obfuscation complexity for a given module. Due to the C programming language specifics or to the internal representation of the code by Pips, the definition of some complexities has been revised, and for some complexities, only an estimation of its value is possible.

The computation of each metric relies exclusively on the static analysis of the program. Using dynamic analysis to calculate obfuscation complexity, although being more precise in some cases, would have been more complex because it would have required the generation of enough input to represent all the possible inputs.

Obfuscation complexities are stored in the Pips database as an union type called `obfuscation_complexity` that can be either a `mu1_complexity`, a `mu2_complexity` ... All the obfuscation complexities are stored in a list of type `obfuscation_complexity_list`. Then, the Pips databases associates each `obfuscation_complexity_list` to a module.

For instance, the \(\mu_3\) complexity of the module `main` of a program is stored as an `obfuscation_complexity` in the `obfuscation_complexity_list` associated to the module `main`.

To access a module’s obfuscation complexity in Pyps, a property was added to the `module` class. This property triggers the call to a function retrieving the complexity in the Pips database.
The obfuscations complexities are computed for each module of a program and the reduction operation we use to obtain the complexity of the program is the addition. Using the addition operation allows to take every module into account when calculating the obfuscation complexity of the program. Notice that other binding operations might be considered in the reduction of the complexities among all modules than the addition. The impact (and definition) of such other operations needs to be evaluated and is kept as future work.

3.1.1 The $\mu_1$ complexity (Program length)

Defined as the number of operator and operands of a program, this complexity also called Halstead’s complexity is directly linked to the program’s code length. The internal representation of PIPS being closer to a Fortran representation, the `compute mu1 complexity` pass may not always give an exact value of a module’s $\mu_1$ complexity. For instance, the internal representation of Pips tends to replace `for` loops by Fortran `do` loops whenever it is possible. Yet we consider the returned value sufficiently close to the real number of operations and operands. In practice, the `compute mu1 complexity` pass analyses the module’s Abstract Syntax Tree (AST) to count the number of operators and operands of the module. The computation of the $\mu_1$ complexity is illustrated in listing 1.

```c
#include <stdio.h>
/* Computed mu1 complexity of this module: 16 */
int main()
{
    int i;
    for (i=0;i<15;i++)
    {
        printf("iteration %d\n",i);
    }
    return 0;
}
```

Listing 1: Example of $\mu_1$ complexity.

3.1.2 The $\mu_2$ complexity (Cyclomatic complexity)

McCabe’s complexity [9] is computed from the Control Flow Graph (CFG) $C$ associated to the considered program. Its value is $e - n + p$ where $e$ stands for the number of edges of $C$, $n$ is the number of vertices of $C$ and $p$ corresponds to the number of connected components of $C$. This can be fairly approximated by the number of predicates in the program plus one. Hence the `compute mu2 complexity` pass counts the number of loops and tests in the program it is run on. In practice, the `compute mu2 complexity` pass analyses the AST of the module to count the number of loops (`for` and `while`) and tests (`switch` are counted as $N$ nested tests, where $N$ is the number of cases in the `switch` statement). On the example of listing 2, the calculated $\mu_2$ complexity of the `main` module is 6.

```c
#include <stdio.h>
/* Computed mu2 complexity of this module: 4 */
/* Computed mu3 complexity of this module: 2 */
int main()
{
    int i = 0;
    int j = 0;
    while (i<16){
        printf("iteration %d\n", i);
        if (i>2){
            j+=i;
        }
    }
    if (j >= 3){
        printf("j is greater than 3\n");
    }
}
```

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3.1 Implementing the Metrics

3.1.3 The \( \mu_3 \) complexity (Nesting complexity)

The nesting complexity defined by Harrison [7] uses the CFG of the program to consider the nesting of nodes when measuring the complexity of a program. For each node of the control flow, the complexity of the program is incremented by the Halstead’s complexity of this node plus the number of nodes within its range plus the Halstead’s complexity of each of these nodes.

Implementing the actual definition of Harrison’s complexity would introduce redundancy with the Halstead’s complexity (the \( \mu_1 \) complexity) and McCabe’s complexity as this complexity tries to replace both of these complexities. Therefore, we redefined the \( \mu_3 \) complexity of a module as the maximum depth of predicate nesting in the module. This new definition will complement MacCabe’s complexity. MacCabe’s complexity will stimulate the appearance of predicates and our \( \mu_3 \) complexity will stimulate their nesting (and only their nesting). Like in the compute_mu1_complexity and the compute_mu2_complexity passes, the AST of the module is analysed to find the maximum depth of the module’s statements in the module. The internal representation of Pips representing switch statement as nested test statements, the depth of a case is its rank in the list of cases of the switch statement. On the example of figure 2, the calculated \( \mu_3 \) complexity of the main module is 2.

3.1.4 The \( \mu_4 \) complexity (Data flow complexity)

The \( \mu_4 \) complexity reflects the data flow complexity by adding the distances between the declaration of variables and their actual usage. For instance, global variable are usually harder to manipulate than local one and more generally, the longer a variable’s scope is, the more complicated it is for an attacker to track the variable manipulation. The goal of the \( \mu_4 \) complexity is therefore to count the number of variables that are defined outside of the blocks where they are used in (e.g. global variables, same variables used in different blocks). Here, blocks are semantical blocks of the module, and although it would be more accurate for the splitting to be adapted to the given module semantic, we had to decide for a splitting strategy that would be the same for every module that can be met since we want the pass to be completely automatic.

In practice, the splitting strategy we selected operates as follows : loops (condition and body), tests branches and syntax blocks (parts of code between brackets) are considered as atomic blocks. Moreover, when a loop, test or black statement ends, a new block is opened. Loops, tests and syntax blocks constitute natural semantic blocks with their own coherence, and a variable used in two areas of the code separated by a block is harder to estimate as it could have been modified in that block. This splitting pattern is easily applied when given the module’s AST and offers an acceptable solution, although not optimal (an optimal splitting could be found by adapting the splitting more precisely to the given program), to the splitting problem.

When the module has been split into blocks, its \( \mu_4 \) complexity is the sum of the \( \mu_4 \) complexity of its blocks. The \( \mu_4 \) complexity of a block is the number of variables used but not defined in this block. If a same variable is used more than once in a block, it will we counted every time it is used without being defined in the current block. Remark: This definition of the data flow complexity considers variable affectation as variable usage and not as variable definition. Also, other binding operations might be considered in the reduction of the \( \mu_4 \) complexity In the example on listing 3, the computed \( \mu_4 \) complexity of the main module is 15.

3.1.5 The \( \mu_5 \) complexity (Fan-in/out complexity)

Henry and kafura defined a software measure based on information flow [8] as \( \text{length} \times (\text{fanin} \times \text{fanout})^{\times 2} \), length being the \( \mu_1 \) complexity or McCabe complexity of the module. The fanin of a module \( M \) is the number of local flow into \( M \) plus the number of data structures read by \( M \). The fanout of a module \( M \) is the number of local flow from \( M \) plus the number of data structures in which \( M \) writes.

To avoid redundancy and to keep the complexity linear (the power of 2 only being a weight), the \( \mu_5 \) complexity has been redefined has the product \( \text{fanin} \times \text{fanout} \). In C, the usage of pointers making the

return 0;

Listing 2: Example of \( \mu_2 \) and \( \mu_3 \) complexity.
3.1 Implementing the Metrics

3.1 IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS

```c
#include <stdio.h>

int main()
{
    int size = 10;
    int i, k;
    int a[size][size];
    int b[size][size];
    for (i = 0; i < size; i++)
        for (k = 0; k < size; k++)
            a[i][k] = i+k;
    return 0;
}
```

Listing 3: Example of $\mu_4$ complexity.

```c
#include <stdio.h>

int main()
{
    int size = 10;
    int i, j;
    int k = 4;
    for (i = 0; i < 10; i++)
        for (j = 0; j < 10; j++)
            matrix[i][j] = i+j;
    foo(k);
    return 0;
}
```

Listing 4: Example of $\mu_5$ complexity.

The $\mu_6$ complexity (data structure complexity)

The regular definition of the $\mu_6$ complexity of a variable is the dimension of this variable (e.g. the $\mu_6$ complexity of a vector is 1, the $\mu_6$ complexity of a matrix is 2). Since in C, the dimension of a data
structure does not have the same semantic value as in other languages. The \( \mu_6 \) complexity of a variable has been redefined as its size (in bytes). Yet, this poses a problem with pointers. For instance: whereas a picture is often modelled as a two dimension matrix of pixels, it could be stored in a one dimension array where the pixel \((i,j)\) will be at the \( j + width \times i \) position. Moreover, if an array has been declared with no dimension and its memory is dynamically allocated later in the code its dimension cannot be known statically. Dynamic allocation should be taken into account as a variable whose size is dynamically allocated is more complex that statically sized variable from an obfuscation point of view. It is handled using the \( \mu_1 \) complexity: the number of operands and operators inside the arguments of the called allocation function (e.g. `malloc`, `calloc`) is added to the \( \mu_{60} \) complexity of the variable on which the allocation function is applied.

In order to deal with dynamic sized arrays (e.g. `int v[n];`) the `approximate_eval` pass is called before calculating the program’s \( \mu_6 \) complexity to replace variable by an upper-bound of their values. If the size of a variable cannot be calculated statically and an upper-bound of its size cannot be calculated then the variable size is assumed to be 1. Finally, for the full module, its \( \mu_6 \) complexity sums the \( \mu_i \) complexity of each involved variable. In the example on listing 5, the calculated \( \mu_6 \) complexity of the module `main` is 63 (in the declaration of k, i has been approximated to 3 by the pass `approximate_eval`).

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>

typedef struct { int champ1; int champ2; long champ3; } t;

/* Computed \( \mu_6 \) complexity of this module: 63*/
int main(){
    char * s = "ma variable";
    char x[] = "hello world ha ha";
    char r[5] = "abcde";
    int i;
    t myt = {2,3,4};
    if (myt.champ1 > 2){
        i = 3;
    }else{
        i = 1;
    }
    int k[i];
    return 0;
}
```

Listing 5: Example of \( \mu_6 \) complexity.

### 3.2 Selecting the Pips transformations

Although the main purpose of Pips transformations is to enhance parallelism of a program, several transformations can be used for source code obfuscation. Apart from the `remove_comments` and `scramble_variable_names` passes that were developed in the context of the SHADOBF project, all the presented transformations were already implemented in Pips. The table 1 page 23 summarizes the chosen transformations, their quality (in an obfuscation point of view) and their impact of the six obfuscation complexities.

#### 3.2.1 Loop unrolling

The `unroll` pass unrolls a loop by a given rate. The figure 4 shows an example of loop unrolling for a rate of 4. Loop unrolling increases highly the \( \mu_1 \) complexity (the higher the rate, the higher the \( \mu_1 \) increasing) and has a small impact on the \( \mu_2 \), \( \mu_4 \) and \( \mu_6 \) complexities because of the added loop and variables.

Considering the \( \mu_1 \) complexity, the loop unrolling transformation has a high potency. This transformation is also free since it requires \( O(1) \) more resources than the original form. But loop unrolling has a trivial resilience: reversing the transformation only implies polynomial time and local work.
3.2 Selecting the Pips transformations

3 IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS

```c
#include <stdio.h>

int main()
{
  int i;
  int a[15];
  //Pips generated variable
  int LU_NUB0, LU_IB0, LU_IND0;

  LU_NUB0 = 15;
  LU_IB0 = 3;
  for(LU_IND0 = 0; LU_IND0 <= LU_IB0-1; LU_IND0 += 1) {
    a[LU_IND0*1+0] = LU_IND0*1+0;
  }

  i = 0+MAX0(LU_NUB0, 0)*1;
  return 0;
}
```

(a) original program

```c
#include <stdio.h>

int main()
{
  int i;
  int a[15];
  for(i=0;i<15;i++){
    a[i]=i;
  }
  return 0;
}
```

(b) transformed program with a rate of 4

Figure 4: Example of loop unrolling.

3.2.2 Inlining

The inlining pass includes a function’s code into a function that calls the latter. The figure 5 shows an example of function inlining. Function inlining highly increases the $\mu_1$ complexity of the modules were the function has been inlined, it also increases the $\mu_6$ complexity of these modules. On the other hand, it reduces the $\mu_5$ complexity of the inlined function since it will be called in less functions. Moreover, the other complexities can be increased for the modules where the function has been inlined as the inlined function will bring new predicates, increase nesting levels, ...

Considering the $\mu_1$ or $\mu_6$ complexity, the inlining transformation has a high potency provided the inlined function is long enough and its cost is free (it does not add many more operations in the program). Its resilience is strong because reversing the transformation would require polynomial time and interprocedural analysis of the program. If the definition of the inlined function is removed, then the resilience is one-way.
3.2 Selecting the PIPS transformations

3.2.3 Unfolding function calls

The unfolding pass inlines function calls recursively in order to remove every function call from a given module. Its properties are the same as the inline pass with higher influences on the complexities and its resilience is “full” (the time necessary to revert the transformation becomes exponential).

3.2.4 Localizing declarations

The localize_declaration pass moves variables declarations closer to their uses. The figure 6 shows an example of declaration localization. Declaration localization increases the $\mu_6$ complexity by replacing long scope global variables by many small scope local variables. The other complexities usually stay unchanged.

Considering the $\mu_6$ complexity, the localize_declaration transformation has a medium potency and it has a free cost. Its resilience is weak: it requires a polynomial time and an analysis of the global data flow to reverse this transformation.

![Figure 5: Example of function inlining.](image)

Source code obfuscation by mean of Evolutionary Algorithms
#include <stdio.h>

int main()
{
    int i, j;
    int a[15][15];
    for(i=0;i<15;i++)
    {
        for(j=0;j<15;j++)
        {
            a[i][j] = i+j;
        }
    }
    for(i=0;i<15;i++)
    {
        for(j=0;j<15;j++)
        {
            a[i][j] = i+j;
        }
    }
    return 0;
}

int main()
{
    int i;
    int a[15][15];
    for(i = 0; i <= 14; i += 1) {
        //PIPS generated variable
        int j;
        for(j = 0; j <= 14; j += 1)
        {
            a[i][j] = i+j;
        }
    }
    for(i = 0; i <= 14; i += 1) {
        //PIPS generated variable
        int j;
        for(j = 0; j <= 14; j += 1)
        {
            a[i][j] = i+j;
        }
    }
    return 0;
}

(a) original program
(b) transformed program

Figure 6: Example of localize_declarations.

3.2.5 Removing Comments

The remove_comments pass remove every commentaries from the code. Its does not have any impact of the six complexities. Therefore, its potency is zero. However, its cost is free and its resilience is one-way.

3.2.6 Scrambling variable names

The scrambe_variable_names pass aims to remove any semantic content in the name of variables by renaming them with random generated names. This pass is actually under development and was not in the pool of transformations when running the experiments presented in this report.

3.2.7 Outlining

The outlining pass defines a function which body is a loop or a loop nest selected in the given module. That loop (or loop nest) is then replaced by a call to the created function. The figure 7 shows an example of function outlining. This transformation increases the $\mu_5$ complexity.

Considering the $\mu_5$ complexity, the outlining transformation has a high potency and has a free cost. Moreover, it has a strong resilience as inverting the transformation would require inter procedural analysis.
### 3.2 Selecting the Pips transformations

#### 3.2.8 Index set splitting

The **index_set_splitting** splits a loop into two loops. The first loop ends at a given iteration and the second starts on the next iteration. The figure 8 shows an example of index set splitting on the seventh iteration. This transformation increases the $\mu_2$ and the $\mu_1$ complexity.

Considering the $\mu_2$ complexity, the index set splitting transformation has a low potency, a free cost and a weak resilience (reverting the transformation only require global analysis).

#### 3.2.9 Code flattening

The **flatten_code** pass aims to enlarge basic blocks of the given module. It moves declarations to a higher level in the AST, making global variable out of local variables and unrolls completely loops with constant bounds. The figure 9 shows an example of code flattening. This transformations increases the $\mu_4$ complexity and the loop unrolling increases the $\mu_1$ complexity.

Considering the $\mu_4$ complexity, Code flattening has a medium potency and a free cost. Its resilience is strong since reversing the transformation would require inter procedural analysis of the variable lifetime.

---

**Figure 7:** Example of function outlining.

```c
#include <stdio.h>

int main()
    
    int i, j;
    int a[15][15];

    for(i=0;i<15;i++)
        for(j=0;j<15;j++)
            a[i][j] = i+j;

    return 0;
}
```

*(a) original program*

```c
#include <stdio.h>

void foo(int a[15][15])
    
    //PIPS generated variable
    int i, j;

    for(i = 0; i <= 14; i += 1)
        for(j = 0; j <= 14; j += 1)
            a[i][j] = i+j;

    int main()
    
    int i, j;
    int a[15][15];

    foo(a);

    return 0;
}
```

*(b) transformed program*

**Figure 8:** Example of index set splitting at iteration 7.

---

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3.2 Selecting the PIPS transformations

3.2.10 Loop fusion

The loop_fusion pass tries to merge a given loop with the following loop provided both loops have the same index and iteration set. Loop fusion is not an obfuscation transformation so to speak, but it is interesting as it could break the semantic unity of two loops by merging them together and create blocks of instructions that could be operated on by other transformations.

3.2.11 Parallel loop generation

Parallel loop generation is a sequence of transformations used in pypsearch to generate parallel loop and apply OpenMP pragmas on them. The sequence of transformation is composed of the following passes: privatize_module, coarse_grain_parallelization and ompify_code.

The privatize_module pass marks local variables of loops as private, preparing the module for the passes coarse_grain_parallelization and ompify_code that will add OpenMP pragmas on the code when possible.

This transformation introduces parallelism in the code but has a very low obfuscating power. Since pragmas are not counted for the calculation of the $\mu_i$, this transformation does not change the complexities. Reverting this transformation is quite easy, hence its resilience is trivial. However, OpenMP introducing reduction can be harder to understand for readers who are not familiar with the OpenMP standards, giving to this transformation a weak resilience.

On the other hand, introducing OpenMP pragma in the code can accelerate its execution time for a reasonable cost, which can be interesting when applying many execution slowing obfuscating transformations.
When running multi-objective evolutionary algorithms, adding transformations that do not change the complexities is an interesting thing. The new individuals formed with these transformations will be compared to other individuals whose complexities have been changed. They might even be preferred to individuals "more obfuscated" if they stay on a low-ranked Pareto front.

### Table 1: Selected transformations in PIPS and their relative impact on the chosen complexities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transformation</th>
<th>Potency</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Impact on complexities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(\mu_1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop unrolling</td>
<td>high((\mu_1))</td>
<td>trivial</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inlining</td>
<td>high(all)</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>one-way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Localize declarations</td>
<td>medium((\mu_3))</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove comments</td>
<td>zero</td>
<td>one-way</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scramble variable names</td>
<td>zero</td>
<td>one-way</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlining</td>
<td>medium((\mu_4))</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index set splitting</td>
<td>low((\mu_2))</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfolding</td>
<td>high(all)</td>
<td>full</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flattening code</td>
<td>medium((\mu_4))</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop fusion</td>
<td>zero</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parallel loop</td>
<td>zero</td>
<td>trivial weak</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3.1 Shadobf

### Workspace management in Pyps

Pips passes are called through its Python front-end Pyps. The three main classes provided by Pyps are the workspace class, the module class and the loop class. The workspace class represents a program and the module class represents a function. The Pips passes are methods of the module and loop classes (depending on whether the passes is applied on a loop or on a function).

Pyps and its modules provide several different workspace classes, each one providing new functionality. To combine the functionalities of several workspaces, the user has to define a new workspace class that will use multi inheritance to inherit the methods and attributes of its parents (see figure 11).

Special workspaces used in the project
3.3 Shadobf

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import pyps
import workspace_gettime
import pyrops

class workspace(workspace_gettime.workspace, pyrops.workspace):
    pass

w = workspace("source.c")
w.props.UNROLL_RATE=4
w.fun.main.loops()[0].unroll()  # Method inherited from workspace_gettime
w.display()
execution_times = w.benchmark(iterations=3)['main']  # Method inherited from workspace_gettime
print(execution_times)
w.save()
w.close()

Figure 11: Exemple of workspace inheritance tree.

The most used workspaces in this projects are **pyrops.workspace** and **workspace_gettime.workspace**. 
**Pyrops** is a module of **Pyps** defining a workspace that uses Pyro 3\(^2\). Pyro stands for **PY**thon **Remote** Object and is a python library implementing Remote Procedure Call for python 2. So far, using **Pyrops** workspaces is the only way to work on several workspaces at a time. In the **pyrops.workspace**, the usual attribute **cypips** storing the python/c interface is replaced by a proxy to a RPC server.

Therefore, when calling a method or manipulating an attribute of a **Pyrops** workspace like with any regular workspace, the method is invoked or the attribute is accessed on the RPC server started on the workspace creation.

**Workspace_gettime** is a module of **Pyps** defining a workspace enabling the user to benchmark a program’s modules execution times. The **workspace_gettime** workspace includes new functions and pragmas in the program’s code in order to be able to measure the execution time of a module only.

An example of program benchmarking is seen on the example of figure 12.

3.3.2 The architecture of pypsearch

**Pypsearch** uses **Pyrops** and **workspace_gettime** workspaces in order to work with several workspace at a time and to be able to estimate their execution time. In **pypsearch**, each individual is modelled by a class

\(^2\)Although the Pyro developers advise to switch to Pyro 4, Pyro 3 is still the version packaged in Debian, hence the older version.
3.3 **Shadobf**

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named Individual which is strongly linked to a workspace inheriting from workspace_gettime.workspace and pyrops.workspace.

The main attributes of the Individual class are ws: the workspace associated with each instance of the class which is opened in the class constructor, mutation: the list of the mutations that have been applied, execution_time: the mean execution time of the individual and living which indicates if the individual is still "alive" (i.e. if its workspace ws is still opened).

Mutations are applied to an individual by calling its push method and its execution_time is updated by calling the rate method.

A simplified view of the class Individual is shown on the figure 13

```
Individual

__init__ (...): Individual
push(mutation) : None
clone() : Individual
rate() : None
rip() : None
```

**Figure 13:** The Individual class in pypsearch (simplified view).

The genetic algorithm implemented in pypsearch is a classic simple criteria algorithm that does not allow identical individuals in a same generation. It is described in algorithm 3.

3.3.3 **The Shadobf engine**

The Shadobf project includes a python program that implements EAs and uses Pyps to run Pips passes and manipulate programs. This Python program is divided in two pieces:

shadobf implements the EA used in experiences presented in this report.

pompe is a python program called from the command line to manipulate Pips workspaces and pilot the obfuscation process on a given individual.

The figure 14 summarizes the architecture of the whole Shadobf engine. The transformations and the obfuscation complexity passes are implemented in Pips which is linked with Pyps using swig. Pyps access Pips results by reading them in the Pips database with special C functions linked to Python with swig.

Pyps classes and functions are imported in the pompe program witch opens workspaces, applies transformations, rates individuals and validate them. Let’s recall that pompe is a standalone program that is called from the command line.

Shadobf is the program running the EAs, it uses the subprocess Python module to call pompe and reads the outputs of the subprocess to get the results.

We will now detail each of these components.
3.3.4 pompe : the Pyps interface

Pompe is a command-line tool that uses Pyps workspaces to manipulate individuals. Its purpose is to separate the source code manipulations from the global evolution in a difference process and has been developed to answer three major problems met with Pips.

- Precondition calculation are very costly for a computation time point of view
- Errors or warning would systematically kill the process using Pyps
- Opening and closing Pips workspaces in a same process would make its memory consumption grow out of reasonable bounds (and eventually cause the process to be killed for out of memory reason)

After applying several transformations, the calculation of preconditions for a single individual could take more than a week. Therefore, we need to be able to stop this computation and continue the evolution.

When Pips would meet an error or too many warnings while running, it would just stop running with a sigabort or sigkill message that cannot be caught, killing Pyps (or the program than called the Pyps methods) as a consequence. Therefore, we cannot have the EA and the workspace handling be done in the same process or the evolutionary run would be killed on the first degenerate individual.

In practice, when a Pips workspace is closed, the memory it used is not completely freed. Opening and closing several Pips workspaces in a same process would make its memory consumption grow without reducing and lead inevitably to being killed by the operating system Out-of-memory killer. Moving all the Pips related operations in a new process is the better solution to these three problems. When calling pompe through a subprocess, SHADOBF waits for the results and kills the subprocess if it has not finished its work in a fixed time length. If PIPS stops running because of an error, only the subprocess is killed and the evolutionary run can continue. Finally, a new subprocess being called for each individual manipulation the memory is freed when the process is finished.

From a practical point of view, pompe handles three main tasks : (1) generating the benchmark used to validate each produced individual, (2) rating (calculating the obfuscation complexities of) the individuals and (3) applying transformations on them.
The validation of individuals is handled by a Validation class with the four following methods:

**generate** : generates a benchmark and storing references outputs and execution times (obtained by running the original individual on the generated benchmark).

**validate** : validates an individual by running it on the given benchmark and checking the output is the same as the reference.

**printBench** : print the benchmark, the output and execution time references to a text file

**parseBench** : reads the benchmark and the references from a text file

In the Validation class implemented in pompe, theses methods are empty. The user has to create his or her own Python program that will import pompe and will implement his or her own Validation class inheriting the four methods of the Pompe.Validation class.

Remark : If pompe is used with its empty Validation class, the program will still work but individuals will not be validated, therefore allowing degenerate individuals in the population.

Pompe takes paths to the sources files of the individual it has to work on in addition to several parameters depending on the task to be completed and outputs paths to new individual generated (when the generation of a new individual is asked). One typical call to pompe could be :

```
pompe.py --sources matrix_mul_matrix.c --flags -D_BITS_BYTESWAP_H --fitness mu1 \n  --mutation "localizeDeclaration;main" --benchmark benchmark --work mutate
```

This example illustrates the following command line options of pompe.

- **--sources matrix_mul_matrix.c** gives the path to source code of the individual to work on.
- **--flags -D_BITS_BYTESWAP_H** is a flag that should be given to gcc when compiling the code.
- **--fitness mu1** gives the fitness that must be rated.
- **--mutation "localizeDeclaration;main"** indicates the transformation that must be applied and precises the module on which it must be applied.
- **--benchmark benchmark** gives the path to the benchmark generated from the original individual ad printed in a text file.
- **--work mutate** indicates that pompe must generate a new individual from the given sources.
3.3 Shadobf : the evolution manager

SHADOBF implements EAs and handles evolutionary runs, letting pompe handle operations on individuals. The two main evolutionary algorithms implemented are: a simple single objective EA and the NSGA-II algorithm. Both of these algorithms can be used in a ring island model as defined in §3.3.5.

In addition of optimizing a given source code following the obfuscation complexities previously summarized, SHADOBF guarantees that the produced individuals are not degenerate. This means that the individuals produced by the evolutionary runs have a high probability to give the same output as the original individual for the same input and without taking too long time. To do so, a benchmark is generated, the original individual is compiled and this benchmark is run. Its output and execution time are then saved for reference. During the evolutionary run, every new individual is compiled and run against the benchmark. If the output is not strictly equal to the reference or if the execution time is too long (the factor being set by the user) compared to the execution time of the original individual then the new individual is declared invalid and a new random one is generated to take its place (see the algorithms 6 and 5).

The ring island model

The ring island model introduces parallelism in an EA by allowing several running EAs to communicate their best individuals to each other at some point of their computation. Each running instance of EA is an island and the communicated individuals are migrants. In shadobf, the islands send their whole population to the next island when a fixed generation is reached, leading to an asynchronous model which is more efficient from a computation point of view. When an island receives individuals from another island, the individuals are added to the current children population that is being built. They will eventually be integrated in the next generation if they can compete with the other individuals. A list of generation can be given to an island in order to make the island send its population when each one of these generations is reached.

Figure 15: Example of ring island model featuring 4 islands.

The shadobf mainloop

The shadobf mainloop is the same regardless of the EA heuristic which is considered in the sens that the used EA will change the sort function: the single objective algorithm will sort the individuals of a population by their complexity using a regular sorting algorithm (since only one complexity is used). When running multi-objective mode, the NSGA-II algorithm will sort the individuals of a population using the non domination sorting algorithm detailed in §2.3.
Remark : when using the NSGA-II algorithm, the renewal rate has the same value as the parent population size

Algorithm 4: SHADOBF general evolutionary run.

\[
G_1 = \{ \text{original individual} \} \\
g = 1 \\
generate\_benchmark(G_1[1]) \\
rate(G_1[1]) \\
generate first children population \( Q_1 \) \( \text{sort}(Q_1) \) // sort the population according to the EA in use \\
G_1 = G_1 \cup Q_1 \\
sort(G_1) \\
g = 2 \\
\text{while } g <= \text{max generation do} \\
\quad Q_g = \text{make\_new\_population}(G_{g-1}) \\
\quad \text{sort}(Q_g) \\
\quad G_g = G_{g-1}[0 : \text{renewal rate}] \cup Q_g[0 : \text{renewal rate}] \\
\quad \text{sort}(G_g) \\
\]

The first children population is composed of mutated copies of the original individual, each one being the result of a different mutation.

Algorithm 5: Creation the first children population \( Q_1 \) from a parent individual \( I \).

\[
Q_1 = \emptyset \\
M = \{ \text{mutations available for } I \} \\
\text{shuffle } M \\
\text{for each mutation in } M \text{ do} \\
\quad i = \text{evolve}(I, \text{mutation}) \quad // \text{new individual, result of the application of mutation to } I \\
\quad \text{calculate obfuscation metrics for } i \\
\quad \text{if } i \text{ is valid then} \\
\quad \quad Q_1 = Q_1 \cup \{ i \} \\
\quad \quad \text{if size}(Q_1) = (\text{population size -1}) \text{ then} \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{break} \\
\]

The next children populations are composed of mutated copies of individuals of the parent populations. Notice that the parent population being assumed sorted, if the renewal rate is inferior to the parent population size then only the best individuals from the parent population will be copied and mutated. One could chose to shuffle the parent population to add even more randomness to the process of building the children population, but this will cost a new sorting of the parent population.

4 Validation on a concrete program

4.1 Matrix mul matrix

The presented results were obtained by running SHADOBF on a program multiplying two matrix together which source code is presented in listing D.1. This program was chosen as an example because its source code is easy to understand, making its more obfuscated versions more obvious to distinguish. Moreover this program contains many loops and most of the selected transformations only apply to loops.

The table 2 shows the obfuscation complexities for each modules of the matrix_mul_matrix program, namely : matrix_mul_matrix, parse_matrix and main.

The validation implemented for this program generates a benchmark of randomly generated matrices that are given to the original program to obtain the output and execution time references. The number of matrices, their dimensions and values are chosen randomly at the benchmark generation.
4.2 Single objective runs

In this section, we will show some results obtained by running a simple objective EA on matrix_mul_matrix. For some complexities, the computation of the EA was too long and therefore we could not have the results in time to summarize them in this report at the moment of writing.

All these runs were launched with the same parameters:

- The population size is 30 individuals
- The renewal rate is 15 individuals per generation.
- The limit of generations to compute is 30.
- The pool of transformations is the one described in §3.2.
- The used EA is the single objective version of the algorithm presented in §3.3.5.

### 4.2.1 $\mu_3$ complexity

We present here a single objective run for the $\mu_3$ complexity. Figure 16 shows the evolution of the $\mu_3$ complexity through generations. The table 3 shows the obfuscation complexities of each modules of the obfuscated version of matrix_mul_matrix obtained at the end of the run.

The execution time of the obfuscated program produced by this evolutionary run was 388 s (the reference time being 643 s).

### 4.2.2 $\mu_5$ complexity

We present here a single objective run for the $\mu_5$ complexity. Figure 17 shows the evolution of the $\mu_5$ complexity through generations. The table 4 shows the obfuscation complexities of each modules of the obfuscated version of matrix_mul_matrix obtained at the end of the run.

The execution time of the obfuscated program produced by this evolutionary run was 259 s (the reference time being 257 s).
4.2 Single objective runs

**VALIDATION ON A CONCRETE PROGRAM**

![Graph](image1.png)

**Figure 16:** $\mu_3$ complexity through generations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>$\mu_1$</th>
<th>$\mu_2$</th>
<th>$\mu_3$</th>
<th>$\mu_4$</th>
<th>$\mu_5$</th>
<th>$\mu_6$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>matrix_mul_matrix</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parse_matrix</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>main</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GjWmbANbwh</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ImRejokYGN</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWFBBnBraZ</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aUkajyWUdu</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VuupXqiQca</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YLHawSgipRt</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MWnlmegoRg</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cXThqskROZ</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>1351</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3:** Obfuscation complexities after $\mu_3$ single objective run.

![Graph](image2.png)

**Figure 17:** $\mu_5$ complexity through generations.
In this section we will show several results obtained by running different versions of MOEAs. We will begin by presenting Pareto fronts drawn for runs implying two complexities, then we will give the result obtained by running the NSGA-II algorithm with the six obfuscation complexities in addition to the execution time. Finally, we will show a run obtained applying the ring island model on the NSGA-II algorithm.

4.3.1 Pareto fronts

We present here Pareto fronts drawn for the optimization of two objective. More precisely, the combinations $\mu_1/\mu_2$, $\mu_4/\mu_5$ and $\mu_5$/execution time are presented. These run happened to produce individuals having the exact same complexities (or execution time) very soon in the evolution process. Therefore, we drew the Pareto fronts from the generation before all the individual have the same complexities.

All theses runs were launched with the same parameters, i.e.:

- The population size is 30 individuals
- The renewal rate is 30 individuals per generation (imposed by the NSGA-II algorithm).
- The limit of generations to compute is 30.
- The pool of transformations is the one described in §3.2.
- The used EA is the NSGA-II algorithm.

This run compares the sultanate evolution of the $\mu_1$ and $\mu_2$ complexities. We observed that on the 5th generation, nearly all the individuals had the same complexities. And on the 6th generation, all the individuals had the exact same complexities (i.e. $\mu_1 : 378$, $\mu_2 : 22$).

The figure 18 show the Pareto front for the 4th generation.

The obfuscated program obtained at the end of this run had the following complexities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$\mu_1$</th>
<th>$\mu_2$</th>
<th>$\mu_4$</th>
<th>$\mu_5$</th>
<th>$\mu_6$</th>
<th>execution time</th>
<th>time reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>378</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\mu_4$ and $\mu_5$

Table 4: Obfuscation complexities after $\mu_5$ single run.
4.3 Multiple objective runs  VALIDATION ON A CONCRETE PROGRAM

Figure 18: Pareto front for $\mu_1, \mu_2$ run with NSGA-II, 4th generation (left) and evolution of the complexities (right).

This run compares the sultanate evolution of the $\mu_4$ and $\mu_5$ complexities. We observed that on the 8th and the 9th generations, nearly all the individuals had the same complexities. And on the 10th generation, all the individuals had the exact same complexities (i.e. $\mu_4 : 223$, $\mu_5 : 80$).

The figure 19 show the Pareto front for the 7th generation.

Figure 19: Pareto front for $\mu_4, \mu_5$ run with NSGA-II, 7th generation (left) and evolution of the complexities (right).

The obfuscated program obtained at the end of this run had the following complexities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$\mu_1$</th>
<th>$\mu_2$</th>
<th>$\mu_3$</th>
<th>$\mu_4$</th>
<th>$\mu_5$</th>
<th>$\mu_6$</th>
<th>execution time</th>
<th>time reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>284</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>1571</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\mu_5$ and execution time

This run compares the sultanate evolution of the $\mu_5$ complexity and the execution time. We observed that on the 2d and the 3rd generations, nearly all the individuals had the same complexities. And on the 4th generation, all the individuals had the exact same complexities (i.e. $\mu_5 : 44$, execution time : 121s).

The figure 20 show the Pareto front for the 1st generation.

The obfuscated program obtained at the end of this run had the following complexities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$\mu_1$</th>
<th>$\mu_2$</th>
<th>$\mu_3$</th>
<th>$\mu_4$</th>
<th>$\mu_5$</th>
<th>$\mu_6$</th>
<th>execution time</th>
<th>time reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>246</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2 NSGA-II run on the six obfuscation complexities

We show here the results obtained by running the NSGA-II algorithm for the six obfuscation complexities and the execution time.
Figure 20: Pareto front for $\mu_5$, execution time run with NSGA-II, 1st generation (left) and evolution of the complexities (right).

The $\mu_6$ complexity was compute without calling the \texttt{approximative_eval} pass. Therefore, no upper bound was calculated for variable sized variables. This choice has been made to reduce the time necessary to compute the evolutionary run by removing the need to compute the preconditions of the modules before computing their $\mu_6$ complexity.

The figure 21 show the evolution of the objective values throughout the generations. The table 5 shows the transformations that were applied on \texttt{matrix_mul_matrix} to obtain the best obfuscated program from it.

- The population size is 30 individuals
- The renewal rate is 30 individuals per generation (imposed by the NSGA-II algorithm).
- The limit of generations to compute is 30.
- The pool of transformations is the one described in §3.2.
- The used EA is the NSGA-II algorithm.
- The computing of the $\mu_6$ complexity was done without calling the \texttt{approximative_eval} pass.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transformation</th>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loop unrolling</td>
<td>rate = 4</td>
<td>199997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index set splitting</td>
<td>bound = 18</td>
<td>199986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop unrolling</td>
<td>rate = 4</td>
<td>199998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index set splitting</td>
<td>bound = 18</td>
<td>199995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlining</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>loop 199996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop unrolling</td>
<td>rate = 4</td>
<td>199999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parallel loop making</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>matrix_mul_matrix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlining</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>loop 199974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlining</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>loop 199996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index set splitting</td>
<td>bound = 18</td>
<td>199988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop unrolling</td>
<td>rate = 4</td>
<td>199979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlining</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>loop 199980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index set splitting</td>
<td>bound = 18</td>
<td>199977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inlining</td>
<td>inline : parse_matrix</td>
<td>main</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlining</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>loop 199973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loop unrolling</td>
<td>rate = 4</td>
<td>199996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removing comments</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>bzanWsdQPT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Transformations applied on NSGA-II run (ordered).

The obfuscated program obtained at the end of this run had the following complexities values:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$\mu_1$</th>
<th>$\mu_2$</th>
<th>$\mu_3$</th>
<th>$\mu_4$</th>
<th>$\mu_5$</th>
<th>$\mu_6$</th>
<th>execution time</th>
<th>time reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1400</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2161</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source code obfuscation by mean of Evolutionary Algorithms
4.3 Multiple objective runs

VALIDATION ON A CONCRETE PROGRAM

Figure 21: NSGA-II run on matrix_mul_matrix with the $\mu_1, \mu_2, \mu_3, \mu_4, \mu_5, \mu_6$ and execution time.

4.3.3 Island ring model

We present here the results obtained by applying the ring island model to the NSGA-II algorithm. We used 16 islands to optimize the six obfuscation complexities and the execution time of matrix_mul_matrix.

When the computation of the evolutionary run was finished, we used the sorting techniques used in the NSGA-II algorithm to find the best obfuscated program among the best individuals generated by each island. We then found that the island 2 had produced the best obfuscated version of matrix_mul_matrix. When the computation was over, the island 8 and the island 14 had stopped. The island 8 was stopped because its computation was still not finished when the time allocated on cluster for this run was over and the island 14 stopped because it produced too many degenerate individuals and had not enough valid individuals to continue its computation.

This run was configured as follows:

- The population size is 30 individuals
- The renewal rate is 30 individuals per generation (imposed by the NSGA-II algorithm).
- The limit of generations to compute is 50.
- The pool of transformations is the one described in §3.2.
- The used EA is the NSGA-II algorithm combined with the ring island model.
- 16 islands were running at the same time.
- The 16 Islands sent their population to their neighbors on the 10th, 20th, 30th and 40th generations.
- The island $n$ sends its populations to the island $n + 1 \mod 16$ and receives the populations sent by the island $n - 1 \mod 16$.
- The computing of the $\mu_6$ complexity was done without calling the approximative_eval pass.
4.3 Multiple objectives runs

The following graphics show the evolutions of the complexities values and of the execution time of the individuals throughout the generations for each island. The table summarizes the complexities values and the execution time of the best individuals produced by each island.
4.3 Multiple objective runs

4. VALIDATION ON A CONCRETE PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Island</th>
<th>$\mu_1$</th>
<th>$\mu_2$</th>
<th>$\mu_3$</th>
<th>$\mu_4$</th>
<th>$\mu_5$</th>
<th>$\mu_6$</th>
<th>execution time</th>
<th>Time reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Island 1</td>
<td>2853</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6449</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>1018</td>
<td>1576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 2</td>
<td>2373</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4821</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>6385</td>
<td>5480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 3</td>
<td>3768</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9680</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 4</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4416</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 5</td>
<td>2485</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3837</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 6</td>
<td>6055</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5232</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>2533</td>
<td>2551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 7</td>
<td>5458</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5297</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>4948</td>
<td>7648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 8</td>
<td>2276</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3933</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>6420</td>
<td>125335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 9</td>
<td>1708</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3469</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>1647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 10</td>
<td>1760</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2816</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>3777</td>
<td>6480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 11</td>
<td>3752</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5502</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>10006</td>
<td>10099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 12</td>
<td>1507</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2360</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>707</td>
<td>1194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 13</td>
<td>1205</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2254</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>1199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island 14</td>
<td>2740</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3720</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Best individuals in the 16 islands of the ring island model.

The Island 2 has produced the best obfuscated version of matrix_mul_matrix. The source code of this program D.2 can be seen in the appendices.

Source code obfuscation by mean of Evolutionary Algorithms
4.4 Summary of the obtained results

We summarize the previous results in the table 8. For each complexity, the cell containing the highest value is colored in green. For the time execution, the cell containing the best ratio execution time / time reference is colored in green.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>$\mu_1$</th>
<th>$\mu_2$</th>
<th>$\mu_3$</th>
<th>$\mu_4$</th>
<th>$\mu_5$</th>
<th>$\mu_{exec}$</th>
<th>$\mu_{time}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>S.O.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single $\mu_3$</td>
<td>1351</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>single $\mu_5$</td>
<td>1170</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\mu_1$, $\mu_2$</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>$\mu_5$, execution time</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>2161</td>
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<td>74</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1824</td>
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<td>289</td>
<td>5385</td>
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Table 8: Recapitulation of the presented results (S.O.: Single Objective, M.O.: Multiple Objective). The cells in green highlight the best found results.

The ring island model applied to the NSGA-II algorithm brought the best obfuscated program without augmenting the execution time of the program on the generated benchmark. We can see that optimizing the six obfuscation complexities altogether brought a better obfuscated program than when optimizing only two complexities. Moreover, using the six complexities kept a diversity of complexity values among the individuals throughout the generations whereas the individuals tend quickly to have the same complexity when using only two complexities.

5 Problems met, and choices made

5.1 pypsearch and pompe

At first, the Shadobf was supposed to be an enhancement of pypsearch. But unfortunately too many problems were encountered with Pips and Pyro.

Pyro’s RPC servers tended to keep many unused files open. That caused many file descriptors out of range errors (this error happened on Debian systems, whereas on ArchLinux systems, the error was Too many open files, no matter the value of ulimit -n) that were fatal for the execution of pypsearch. PyPs not being able to open several workspaces at the same time, the only way to work on more than one individual at a time was to use pyrops workspaces, and meet the problems mentioned above. Moreover, when Pips would encounter an error, it would most of the time send a sigabort or sigkill message that would kill pypsearch.

Pypsearch and PYROPS being unmaintained for three years at least and PyRO 3 being deprecated by its developers, we decided to make a new scalable program that would be more resistant to degenerate individuals and to Pips errors.

This program was named shadobf after the name of the project and used some parts of pypsearch for managing the transformations. Its implementation is sequential in the sense that it works on individuals one by one. But using a sequential implementation in order to remove the Pyro dependencies was not enough because the errors caused by Pips would still kill shadobf. Therefore, we decided to divide the program in two parts: shadobf and pompe.

Shadobf kept the high level management of the EAs (i.e. management of populations, of the pool of mutations ...) and pompe would handle all the operation that require Pips (i.e. evaluation of obfuscation complexities, benchmarking, application of transformations ...). Shadobf would call pompe from the command line through the subprocess python module.

5.2 The passes left behind

Some passes were implemented in Pips but unfortunately we were not able to make them stable in time to use them in our transformation pool.

The pass scramble_variable_names aimed to change the name of every variable a name generated at random. Implementing this pass was supposed to lead to a way of rename the functions of the given...
5.3 Pips and Clang

At the beginning of this project, we had to choose a tool for the static analysis and the transformation of source codes. We chose Pips over Clang because of my past experience with Pips and because Pips already brought several transformations. Moreover, SHADOBF was supposed to be an enhancement of pypsearch which is brought by Pips as a PypS module.

6 Future work

This report details a work that is currently still in progress, a final version of this report will be distributed at the end of the internship, including some results and short term objective that would have been reached by then. These results will be presented at the final presentation of this internship in September.

Also, it is planned to submit a paper presenting our work to the French conference ComPAS’13.

6.1 Short term objectives

In §4, only one program was used to validate our work, a short term objective could be to chose other programs with different properties to obfuscate with SHADOBF.

So far, only the ring island model has been implemented in SHADOBF. A less deterministic island model where island could send their populations to any other island could be implemented. This could increase the diversity among the populations of islands.

6.2 Long term objectives

As seen in the results presented in in §3.2, the transformations we selected for our evolutionary runs is essentially composed of transformations that were already implemented in Pips. Implementing new obfuscating transformations in Pips would enable us to enlarge our pool of transformations and introduce more diversity among the individuals. Moreover, a larger pool of transformation would enable us to use heterogeneous islands when running an island model (i.e. each island would have a different pool of transformations) and justify extending the number of generations to be computed in the evolutionary runs.

The following transformations could be implemented in a long term:

- including dead code (increases all the complexities except the $\mu_5$ complexity)
- turning simple predicates into opaque predicates (a highly resilient transformation that could increase the $\mu_1$ complexity)
- replacing all variables by a single global array of pointers, each pointer being treated as pointer to one of the variable that was removed (a one-way resilient transformation that would increase the $\mu_4$ complexity)
7 Conclusion

We showed how combining MOEAs with a source-to-source compiler can optimize the obfuscation of a given program. As for optimizing the execution time of programs, EAs can search the space of available transformations automatically and in a more efficient way.

The validation seen in §4 showed that optimizing the values of the six obfuscations complexities at the same time brings a better obfuscated program than focusing on one or two of those complexities. Moreover, a higher diversity of individuals is observed throughout the generations: during the evolutionary runs optimizing the values of only two obfuscation complexities, the individuals tended to reach the same complexities in less than ten generations whereas a diversity of values was kept among individual when optimizing the six obfuscation complexities.

Adding the execution time as an objective in the multiple objective evolutionary runs helped keeping a tolerable execution time for the obfuscated program. However, it should be noticed that all the transformations implied in our evolutionary runs had at most a cheap cost.

Enlarging the pool of transformations would surely bring better obfuscated program depending of the quality of the added transformations. A higher number of available transformations would increase the diversity of individuals met throughout the generations of the evolutionary runs. Transformations more “obfuscation-oriented” would have a greater impact on the obfuscation complexities than most of the PIPS transformations we used. Including dead code with good opaque predicates would help increasing almost all the obfuscation complexity we considered.

As the evaluation of the potency of an obfuscating transformation requires the choice of an obfuscation metric, obfuscating transformations are often specialized in increasing a few complexities (the number of transformation increasing all the complexity being small). Even though some synergies between two or more obfuscation complexities, using single objective EAs favorites some transformation without guaranteeing the optimality of the obfuscated program according to all the obfuscation metrics. Using MOEAs, an optimally obfuscated program according all the complexities can be found without privileging any complexity. Moreover, the increasing of its execution time can be controlled by adding this criteria in the fitness of the MOEA.

References

A Acronym used

AST  Abstract Syntax Tree
CFG  Control Flow Graph
CSC  Computer Science and Communications
dEA  distributed Evolutionary Algorithm
EA   Evolutionary Algorithm
EAs  Evolutionary Algorithms
MOEA Multi Objective Evolutionary Algorithm
MOEAs Multi Objective Evolutionary Algorithms
GA  Genetic Algorithm
GP  Genetic Programming
UL  University of Luxembourg

B Notations

Do a table of notations
Ex:

- $P = \text{Program}$
- $P' = \text{Program obfuscate}$
- $\tau_{pot}(P) = \text{potency of the transformation from } P \text{ to } P'$
- $\tau_{res}(P) = \text{resilience of the transformation from } P \text{ to } P'$
- $\tau_{cost}(P) = \text{cost of the transformation from } P \text{ to } P'$
- $\tau_{qual}(P) = \text{quality of the transformation from } P \text{ to } P'$
- $E(P) = \text{the complexity of } P$,

C Contributions statistics during this internship

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Lines of code</th>
<th>Commits</th>
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<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pompe</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadobf</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Quantified contributions in Pips, SHADOBF and Pompe.

D Code listings

D.1 The original code of matrix_mul_matrix

```c
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>
#include <string.h>

void matrix_mul_matrix(size_t N, double C[4*N][4*N], double A[4*N][4*N], double B[4*N][4*N]) {
    size_t i, j, k;
    for (i=0; i<4*N; i++) {
        for (j=0; j<4*N; j++) {
            for (k=0; k<4*N; k++) {
```

Source code obfuscation by mean of Evolutionary Algorithms  Page 41
D.2 Obfuscated source code of matrix_mul_matrix produced by combination of the ring island model and NSGA-II

```
{
    C[i][j]+=A[i][k] * B[k][j];
}

int parse_matrix(int n, char *s, double a[4*n][4*n]){  
    int sl = strlen(s);  
    char buffer [687];
    int i = -1;
    int j = 0;
    int p = 0;
    int k = 0;
    for (k = 0; k < sl; k++){
        if (s[k] == '[') {
            j = 0;
            i++;
        } else if (s[k] == ' ') {
            buffer[p] = '0';
            a[i][j] = atof(buffer);
            p = 0;
        } else if (s[k] == ']') {
            buffer[p] = '0';
            a[i][j] = atof(buffer);
            p = 0;
        } else {
            buffer[p] = s[k];
            p++;
        }
    }
    return 0;
}
```

D.2 Obfuscated source code of matrix_mul_matrix produced by combination of the ring island model and NSGA-II

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>
#include <string.h>

void yBsjWVaOsv(size_t N, long int LU_IND0, long int LU_IND2, double A[4*N][4*N], double B[4*N][4*N], double C[4*N][4*N]);
```
void fUjmZfHoPb(size_t N, long int LU_IND0, long int LU_IND2, double A[4*N][4*N], double B[4*N][4*N], double C[4*N][4*N]);
void wZYIYhYnV(size_t N, long int LU_IND0, double A[4*N][4*N], double B[4*N][4*N], double C[4*N][4*N]);
void KwfJWvLoStG(size_t N, long int LU_IND0, double A[4*N][4*N], double B[4*N][4*N], double C[4*N][4*N]);
void fUjmZFhOPb(size_t N, long int LU_IND0, long int LU_IND2, double A[4*N][4*N], double B[4*N][4*N], double C[4*N][4*N]);

//PIPS generated variable
size_t k03;

for(k03 = 0; k03 < 4*N; k03 += 1)
C[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND2+1]*1+0] += A[LU_IND0+1][k03]*B[0][LU_IND2+1]*1+0];

void yBojWVaOsw(size_t N, long int LU_IND0, long int LU_IND2, double A[4*N][4*N], double B[4*N][4*N], double C[4*N][4*N]);

//PIPS generated variable
size_t k01;

for(k01 = 0; k01 < 4*N; k01 += 1)
C[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND2+2]*1+0] += A[LU_IND0+1][k01]*B[0][LU_IND2+2]*1+0];

void fUjmZfHoPb(size_t N, long int LU_IND0, long int LU_IND2, double A[4*N][4*N], double B[4*N][4*N], double C[4*N][4*N]);

//PIPS generated variable
size_t k00;

for(k00 = 0; k00 < 4*N; k00 += 1)
C[LU_IND0][LU_IND2+3]*1+0] += A[LU_IND0][k00]*B[0][LU_IND2+3]*1+0];

void RwZXJQnHhy(int n0, char buffer[687], int i0[1], int p0[1], int sl, double P0[4*n0][4*n0], char *s0)

//PIPS generated variable
int j, k, i, p;

//PIPS generated variable
int LU_NUB0, LU_IB0, LU_IND0;
p = sp[0];
i = s[0];
199995: LU_NUB0 = (sl–1–0+1)/1;
LU_IB0 = MOD(LU_NUB0, 4);
199999:
for(LU_IND0 = 0; LU_IND0 <= LU_IB0–1; LU_IND0 += 1) { if (s0[LU_IND0+1]+0] == ‘\’) { j = 0;
i++;;
} else if (s0[LU_IND0+1]+0] == ‘ ‘) { buffer[p] = ‘\’;
P0[j][j] = atof(buffer);
p = 0;
j++;;
} else if (s0[LU_IND0+1]+0] == ‘) { buffer[p] = ‘\’;
P0[j][j] = atof(buffer);
p = 0;
} else { buffer[p] = s0[LU_IND0+1+0]; p++;;
} }
for(LU_IND0 = LU_IB0; LU_IND0 <= LU_NUB0 - 1; LU_IND0 += 4) {
    if (s0[(LU_IND0+0)*1+0]=='}') {
        j = 0;
        i++;
    }
    else if (s0[(LU_IND0+0)*1+0]==';') {
        buffer[p] = ')0';
        P_0[i][j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
        j++;
    }
    else if (s0[(LU_IND0+0)*1+0]==')') {
        buffer[p] = ')0';
        P_0[i][j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
        j++;
    }
    else if (s0[(LU_IND0+0)*1+0]==':') {
        buffer[p] = s0[(LU_IND0+0)*1+0];
        p++;
    }
    if (s0[(LU_IND0+1)*1+0]==')') {
        j = 0;
        i++;
    }
    else if (s0[(LU_IND0+1)*1+0]==';') {
        buffer[p] = ')0';
        P_0[i][j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
        j++;
    }
    else if (s0[(LU_IND0+1)*1+0]==')') {
        buffer[p] = ')0';
        P_0[i][j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
        j++;
    }
    else if (s0[(LU_IND0+1)*1+0]==':') {
        buffer[p] = s0[(LU_IND0+1)*1+0];
        p++;
    }
    if (s0[(LU_IND0+2)*1+0]==')') {
        j = 0;
        i++;
    }
    else if (s0[(LU_IND0+2)*1+0]==';') {
        buffer[p] = ')0';
        P_0[i][j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
        j++;
    }
    else if (s0[(LU_IND0+2)*1+0]==')') {
        buffer[p] = ')0';
        P_0[i][j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
        j++;
    }
    else if (s0[(LU_IND0+2)*1+0]==':') {
        buffer[p] = s0[(LU_IND0+2)*1+0];
        p++;
    }
    if (s0[(LU_IND0+3)*1+0]==')') {
        j = 0;
        i++;
    }
    else if (s0[(LU_IND0+3)*1+0]==';') {
        buffer[p] = ')0';
        P_0[i][j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
        j++;
    }
    else if (s0[(LU_IND0+3)*1+0]==')') {
buffer[ p ] = '\0';
P_0[i][ j] = atof(buffer);
p = 0;
} else {
    buffer[ p ] = s0[(LU_IND0+3)*1+0];
p++;
}

void PtIXLYOh(size_t N, size_t j1, double A[4*N][4*N], double B[4*N][4*N], double C[4*N][4*N], long int LU_IND0) {
    //PIPS generated variable
    size_t k1;
    for(k1 = 0; k1 < 4*N; k1 += 1)
        C[(LU_IND0+3)*1+0][j1] += A[(LU_IND0+3)*1+0][k1]*B[k1][j1];
}

void wYZYyYhNv(size_t N, long int LU_IND0, double A[4*N][4*N], double B[4*N][4*N], double C[4*N][4*N]) {
    //PIPS generated variable
    size_t j2;
    //PIPS generated variable
    long int LU_NUB0, LU_IB0, LU_IND1;
    //PIPS generated variable
    size_t k20, k21, k22, k23, k24;
    for(LU_IND1 = 0; LU_IND1 < LU_IB0-1; LU_IND1 += 1) {
        //PIPS generated variable
        for(k20 = 0; k20 < 4*N; k20 += 1)
            C[(LU_IND0+2)*1+0][LU_IND1+1]*1+0] += A[(LU_IND0+2)*1+0][k20]*B[k20][LU_IND1+1]*1+0];
    }
    for(LU_IND1 = LU_IB0; LU_IND1 <= LU_NUB0-1; LU_IND1 += 4) {
        //PIPS generated variable
        for(k24 = 0; k24 < 4*N; k24 += 1)
            C[(LU_IND0+2)*1+0][LU_IND1+1]*1+0] += A[(LU_IND0+2)*1+0][k24]*B[k24][LU_IND1+1]*1+0];
    }
}

Source code obfuscation by mean of Evolutionary Algorithms
```c
void matrix_mul_matrix(size_t N, double C[4*N][4*N], double A[4*N][4*N], double B[4*N][4*N])
{
    //PIPS generated variable
    long int LU_NUB0, LU_IB0, LU_IND0;
    //PIPS generated variable
    size_t j0, k0, j1, j2, j3, j4, k4;
    //PIPS generated variable
    long int LU_NUB1, LU_IB1, LU_IND1;
    //PIPS generated variable
    long int LU_NUB2, LU_IB2, LU_IND2;
    //PIPS generated variable
    size_t k00, k01, k02, k03, k04;
    //PIPS generated variable
    long int LU_NUB3, LU_IB3, LU_IND3;
    LU_NUB0 = (4*N-1-0+1/1);
    LU_IB0 = MOD(LU_NUB0, 4);
    for(LU_IND0 = 0; LU_IND0 <= LU_IB0-1; LU_IND0 += 1) {
        LU_IB2 = MOD(LU_NUB2, 4);
    }
    for(LU_IND2 = 0; LU_IND2 <= LU_IB2-1; LU_IND2 += 1) {
        LU_IB3 = MOD(LU_NUB3, 4);
        for(LU_IND3 = 0; LU_IND3 <= LU_IB3-1; LU_IND3 += 1) {
            C[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND2+0]*1+0 = A[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND3+1]*1+0*B[LU_IND3+3]*1+0;
            for(LU_IND2 = 0; LU_IND2 <= LU_IB2-1; LU_IND2 += 1) {
                LU_IB3 = MOD(LU_NUB3, 4);
                for(LU_IND3 = 0; LU_IND3 <= LU_IB3-1; LU_IND3 += 1) {
                    C[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND2+0]*1+0 = A[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND3+1]*1+0*B[LU_IND3+3]*1+0;
                    for(LU_IND2 = 0; LU_IND2 <= LU_IB2-1; LU_IND2 += 1) {
                        LU_IB3 = MOD(LU_NUB3, 4);
                        for(LU_IND3 = 0; LU_IND3 <= LU_IB3-1; LU_IND3 += 1) {
                            C[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND2+0]*1+0 = A[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND3+1]*1+0*B[LU_IND3+3]*1+0;
                            for(LU_IND2 = 0; LU_IND2 <= LU_IB2-1; LU_IND2 += 1) {
                                LU_IB3 = MOD(LU_NUB3, 4);
                                for(LU_IND3 = 0; LU_IND3 <= LU_IB3-1; LU_IND3 += 1) {
                                    C[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND2+0]*1+0 = A[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND3+1]*1+0*B[LU_IND3+3]*1+0;
                                    for(LU_IND2 = 0; LU_IND2 <= LU_IB2-1; LU_IND2 += 1) {
                                        LU_IB3 = MOD(LU_NUB3, 4);
                                        for(LU_IND3 = 0; LU_IND3 <= LU_IB3-1; LU_IND3 += 1) {
                                            C[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND2+0]*1+0 = A[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND3+1]*1+0*B[LU_IND3+3]*1+0;
                                            for(LU_IND2 = 0; LU_IND2 <= LU_IB2-1; LU_IND2 += 1) {
                                                LU_IB3 = MOD(LU_NUB3, 4);
                                                for(LU_IND3 = 0; LU_IND3 <= LU_IB3-1; LU_IND3 += 1) {
                                                    C[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND2+0]*1+0 = A[LU_IND0+1][LU_IND3+1]*1+0*B[LU_IND3+3]*1+0;
                                                }
                                            }
                                        }
                                    }
                                }
                            }
                        }
                    }
                }
            }
        }
    }
}
```
D.2 Obfuscated source code of matrix_mul_matrix produced by combination of the ring island model and NSGA-II

```c
for(k4 = 0; k4 < 4*N; k4 += 1)
    C[(LU_IND0+0)*1+0][j4] += A[(LU_IND0+0)*1+0][k4]*B[k4][j4];

#pragma omp parallel for private(LU_IB1, LU_IND1, LU_NUB1, k3)
for(j3 = 0; j3 < 4*N; j3 += 1)
    LU_NUB1 = (4*N-1+0+1)/1;
    LU_IB1 = MOD(LU_NUB1, 4);

for(LU_IND1 = 0; LU_IND1 <= LU_IB1-1; LU_IND1 += 1)
    C[(LU_IND0+1)*1+0][j3] += A[(LU_IND0+1)*1+0][LU_IND1*1+0]*B[LU_IND1*1+0][j3];

for(LU_IND1 = LU_IB1; LU_IND1 <= LU_NUB1-1; LU_IND1 += 4)
    C[(LU_IND0+1)*1+0][j3] += A[(LU_IND0+1)*1+0][(LU_IND1+1)*1+0]*B[(LU_IND1+1)*1+0][j3];

i = 0+MAX0(LU_NUB0, 0)+1;
void parse_matrix(int n, char *s, double a[4*n][4*n])
{
    int sl;
    // arbitrary long variable
    char buffer[687];
    int i;
    int j;
    int p;
    int k;
    sl = strlen(s);
    i = -1;
    j = 0;
    p = 0;
    k = 0;
    for(k = 0; k <= sl-1; k += 1)
        if(s[k]=='
')
            j = 0;
            i++;
        else if(s[k]==' ')
            buffer[p] = '
';
            a[i][j] = atof(buffer);
            p = 0;
            j++;
        else if(s[k]=='	')
            buffer[p] = '
';
            a[i][j] = atof(buffer);
            p = 0;
        else
            buffer[p] = s[k];
            p++;
}
int main(int argc, char **argv)
{
    int n = atoi(argv[1]);
    double (*a)[4*n][4*n], (*b)[4*n][4*n], (*c)[4*n][4*n];
    // PIPS generated variable
    int LU_NUB0, LU_IB0, LU_IND0;
    // PIPS generated variable
    int LU_NUB1, LU_IB1, LU_IND1;
    a = malloc(sizeof(double)*16*n*n);
    b = malloc(sizeof(double)*16*n*n);
    ```
D.2 Obfuscated source code of matrix_mul_matrix produced by combination of the ring island model and NSGA-II

```c
345  c = calloc(sizeof(double), 16*n*n);
346  int i = 0;
347  int j = 0;
348  {
349    //Parse first matrix
350    //PIPS generated variable
351    int n0 = n;
352    //PIPS generated variable
353    char *s0 = argv[2];
354    //PIPS generated variable
355    double (*P_0)[4*n0][4*n0] = *a;
356    {
357      int sl;
358      //arbitrary long variable
359      char buffer[687];
360      int i;
361      int j;
362      int p;
363      int k;
364      sl = strlen(s0);
365      i = -1;
366      j = 0;
367      p = 0;
368      k = 0;
369      l99995: RwXjQnHhy(n0, buffer, &i, &p, sl, *P_0, s0);
370    }
371  }
372  {
373    //Parse second matrix
374    //PIPS generated variable
375    int n1 = n;
376    //PIPS generated variable
377    char *s1 = argv[3];
378    //PIPS generated variable
379    double (*P_1)[4*n1][4*n1] = *b;
380    {
381      int sl;
382      //arbitrary long variable
383      char buffer[687];
384      int i;
385      int j;
386      int p;
387      int k;
388      sl = strlen(s1);
389      i = -1;
390      j = 0;
391      p = 0;
392      k = 0;
393      l99998: LU_IB1 = (sl-1-0+1)/1;
394      LU_NUB1 = MOD(LU_NUB1, 4);
395      199998: for(LU_IND1 = 0; LU_IND1 <= LU_IB1-1; LU_IND1 += 1) {
396        if (s1[LU_IND1*1+0]==='\n') {
397          j += 1;
398          } else if (s1[LU_IND1*1+0]==='\r') {
399            buffer[p] = '\0';
400            ((*P_1)[1]) [j] = atof(buffer);
401            p = 0;
402            } else if (s1[LU_IND1*1+0]==='\t') {
403              buffer[p] = '\0';
404              ((*P_1)[1]) [j] = atof(buffer);
405              p = 0;
406            } else {
407              buffer[p] = s1[LU_IND1*1+0];
408              p += 1;
409            }
410          }
411        }
412      199990: R
413```
D.2 Obfuscated source code of matrix_mul_matrix produced by combination of the ring island model and NSGA-II

```c
for (LU_IND1 = LU_IB1; LU_IND1 <= LU_NUB1-1; LU_IND1 += 4) {
    if (s1[(LU_IND1+0)*1+0]==')') {
        j = 0;
        i++;
    } else if (s1[(LU_IND1+0)*1+0]==' ') {
        buffer[p] = 'n0';
        ((*P_1)[i])[j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
        j++;
    } else if (s1[(LU_IND1+0)*1+0]=='[') {
        buffer[p] = '\'0';
        ((*P_1)[i])[j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
    } else {
        buffer[p] = s1[(LU_IND1+0)*1+0];
        p++;
    }
    if (s1[(LU_IND1+1)*1+0]==')') {
        j = 0;
        i++;
    } else if (s1[(LU_IND1+1)*1+0]==' ') {
        buffer[p] = 'n0';
        ((*P_1)[i])[j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
        j++;
    } else if (s1[(LU_IND1+1)*1+0]=='[') {
        buffer[p] = '\'0';
        ((*P_1)[i])[j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
    } else {
        buffer[p] = s1[(LU_IND1+1)*1+0];
        p++;
    }
    if (s1[(LU_IND1+2)*1+0]==')') {
        j = 0;
        i++;
    } else if (s1[(LU_IND1+2)*1+0]==' ') {
        buffer[p] = 'n0';
        ((*P_1)[i])[j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
        j++;
    } else if (s1[(LU_IND1+2)*1+0]=='[') {
        buffer[p] = '\'0';
        ((*P_1)[i])[j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
    } else {
        buffer[p] = s1[(LU_IND1+2)*1+0];
        p++;
    }
    if (s1[(LU_IND1+3)*1+0]==')') {
        j = 0;
        i++;
    } else if (s1[(LU_IND1+3)*1+0]==' ') {
        buffer[p] = 'n0';
        ((*P_1)[i])[j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
    } else if (s1[(LU_IND1+3)*1+0]=='[') {
        buffer[p] = '\'0';
        ((*P_1)[i])[j] = atof(buffer);
        p = 0;
    }
}
```
D.2 Obfuscated source code of matrix_mul_matrix produced by combination of the ring island model and NSGA-II

D CODE LISTINGS

```c
j++; } 
else if (s1[(LU_IND1+3)*1+0]=='\n') { 
    buffer[p] = '\n'; 
    ((*P-1)[1])[j] = atof(buffer); 
    p = 0; }
else { 
    buffer[p] = s1[(LU_IND1+3)*1+0]; 
p++; }

if (k) { 
    k = 0+MAX0(LU_NUB1, 0)*1; 
}

//multiply matrix 
matrix_mul_matrix(n, *c, *a, *b);

LU_NUB0 = (4*n-1-0+1)/1; 
LU_IB0 = MOD(LU_NUB0, 4); 
for(LU_IND0 = 0; LU_IND0 <= LU_IB0-1; LU_IND0 += 1) { 
    printf("%f ", ((*c)[LU_IND0*1+0])[LU_IND0*1+0]); 
}
free (a); 
free (b); 
free (c); 
return 0;
```