MockDetector: A technique to identify mock objects created in unit tests

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ABSTRACT

Software dependencies are ubiquitous and may pose problems during testing, because creating usable objects from dependencies is often complicated. Developers, therefore, often introduce mock objects to stand in for dependencies during testing. However, to our knowledge, no static analysis framework provides a tool to automatically identify mock objects created in the unit test cases. The lack of mock object detection can decrease the precision of static analyses, as they are unable to separate methods invoked on mock objects from methods invoked on actual objects.

In this paper, we introduce MockDetector, a technique to identify mock objects. It is able to detect common Java mock libraries' APIs that create mock objects, checking whether there is a call to a mock creation site and then a def-use chain reaching the point of use. Implications of understanding which objects are mock objects include helping static analysis tools identify which dependencies' methods are actually tested, versus mock methods being called.

CCS CONCEPTS

• **Computer systems organization** → **Embedded systems**; *Redundancy*; Robotics; • **Networks** → Network reliability.

KEYWORDS

static analysis, mock objects, unit tests

ACM Reference Format:

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1 INTRODUCTION

2 MOTIVATING EXAMPLE

In this section, we illustrate how our MockDetector tool finds a mock object created within a unit test case. Our tool identifies variables which have been assigned an object flowing from a mock creation site through a def-use chain (possibly of length 0).

First, we would like to discuss an example to illustrate our motivation for this project. Listing 1 illustrates a method *addAll()* that is invoked on a mocked object of Type Collection<Number>. Current static analysis tools, to our knowledge, cannot easily distinguish this method invocation on a mocked object from the method invocation on an actual object. Therefore, a naive static analysis would perceive method invocations on mocked objects as the behaviour getting tested, whereas the purpose of the method invocations on mocked objects are intended model behaviours, so that the actual object's behaviour can be properly tested.

Listing 2 shows the unit test case *testSimpleResolution()* in the benchmark byte-buddy-dep (version 1.7.10) where the mock object TypeDescription is created via a direct call to Java mocking library Mockito's *mock(java.lang.class)*. In this example, our MockDetector tool would utilizes Soot [**?**] to locate the statements that are instances of Assignment Statement with an invoke expression at the right operand, i.e. def-use chain of length 0. It then checks if the method invoked matches with any Java mocking libraries' APIs creating a mock object, by matching the method name, parameter types, and return type (i.e. the method subsignature).

Meanwhile, Listing 3 illustrates the unit test case *testGetIterator()* in the benchmark commons-collections4 (version 4.3), where the array of Node, consists of mock objects created in the helper function *createNodes()*, under this transitive call scenario. In this example with a def-use chain, our tool would first detect the Java mocking library that is in use within the benchmark, and retrieve the corresponding API creating a mock object from the detected Java mocking library. It then utilizes Soot's ReachableMethods with the input of a constructed call graph and the iterator consists of the specific, and checks if any of the statements in the unit test case's body, contains a method invocation that could eventually reach the API.

```
@Test
```

```
public void addAllForIterable() {
        // ...
        final Collection<Number> c = createMock(Collection.class);
        // ...
        expect(c.addAll(inputCollection)).andReturn(true);
        // ...
}
```

Listing 1: This code snippet illustrates an example where a method is invoked on a mocked object in unit test case *addAllForIterable()*

```
import static org.mockito.Mockito.mock;

// ...

@Test
public void testSimpleResolution() throws Exception {
        TypeDescription typeDescription =
                        mock(TypeDescription.class);
// ...
}
```

Listing 2: This example illustrates a direct call to Mockito's *mock(java.lang.class)* function from test case *testSimpleResolution()*.

```
private Node[] createNodes() {
        final Node node1 = createMock(Node.class);
// ...
}

@Test
public void testGetIterator() {
// ...
        final Node[] nodes = createNodes();
// ...
}
```

Listing 3: This example illustrates a transitive call to EasyMock's *CreateMock(java.lang.class)* function from test case *testGetIterator()*.

3 TECHNIQUE

In this section, we describe the technique that MockDetector applies to find unit test cases with mock object created in the test body. Our tool tracks the sites and occurrences of the mock object We separate the tracking and counting of the special case where mock objects created with def-use chain of length 0, from the general case where the def-use chain has length more than 0. We believe the study of immediate mock creation (i.e, def-use length of 0), as well as wrapper mock creation (i.e, def-use chain length more than 0), would provide additional insight of the benchmark.

3.1 Define Common Mocking Library APIs

Our tool stores a pool of common APIs that are used to create mock objects in popular Java mocking libraries, including Mockito, EasyMock, and PowerMock. These APIs are the possible mock creation sites, which are the candidates for def nodes in the def-use chain. They are defined as Enum types for the easy access by our analyzer.

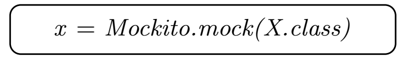

Figure 1: Illustration of the immediate mock (def-use chain of length 0) created in Listing 2, where X represents TypeDescription class in the code.

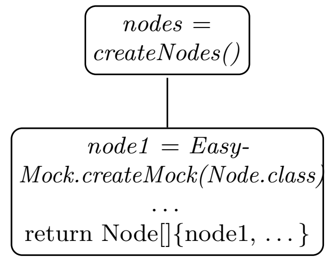

Figure 2: Illustration of the wrapper mock (def-use chain of length 1) created in Listing 3.

3.2 Determine the Mock Library

With the pool of possible APIs to search for, our tool look into the Java benchmark for the Java mocking library it utilizes.

To enable the static analysis over the test suite classes, our tool first generates a driver class in the test suite to invoke all public, non-constructor test cases. Then it uses Soot to analyze the benchmark's test suite, treating the driver class as the main class, so that all test classes and their public, non-constructor test cases are analyzed. With the processed analysis information, our tool applies the Scene feature in Soot to find out the mocking library used by the benchmark.

3.3 Find Immediate Mocks

In this stage, our tool detects and counts the unit test cases with at least one mock objects created immediately. With all the unit test cases processed in the previous step, our tool now retrieves the body for each unit test case, and look for statements similar to the one illustrated in Listing 2, where it is an instance of assignment statement containing a invoke expression at the right hand side. Our tool would then determine if it matches with the determined mocking library's API. Refer to the example, the right operand of the assignment statement is a method invocation of *Mockito.mock()*. After our tool examines the library and subsignature, it verifies that this unit test case contains a mock object created with def-use length of 0, which this path is depicted in Figure 1.

3.4 Find Wrapper Mocks

Refer to Listing 3, our tool also considers the case where the mock object is created via a transitive call. Figure 2 presents the example's def-use path. It illustrates an array of mocked Node objects created in the helper function *createNodes()*, which is an approximation of mock object creation that is considered within our tool's scope. On top of the scheme finding immediate mocks, MockDetector implements Soot's

ReachableMethods to find these wrapper mocks. With the determined mocking library's API taken as the end point, our tool could now tell if this end point is reachable by any of the statements in the test case, excluding the ones creating immediate mocks. This

4 EVALUATION

5 CONCLUSION

6 MATH EQUATIONS

You may want to display math equations in three distinct styles: inline, numbered or non-numbered display. Each of the three are discussed in the next sections.

6.1 Inline (In-text) Equations

A formula that appears in the running text is called an inline or in-text formula. It is produced by the **math** environment, which can be invoked with the usual `\begin ...\end` construction or with the short form `$ ...$`. You can use any of the symbols and structures, from α to ω, available in LaTeX [**?**]; this section will simply show a few examples of in-text equations in context. Notice how this equation: $\lim_{n\rightarrow \infty}x=0$, set here in in-line math style, looks slightly different when set in display style. (See next section).

6.2 Display Equations

A numbered display equation—one set off by vertical space from the text and centered horizontally—is produced by the **equation** environment. An unnumbered display equation is produced by the **displaymath** environment.

Again, in either environment, you can use any of the symbols and structures available in LaTeX; this section will just give a couple of examples of display equations in context. First, consider the equation, shown as an inline equation above:

$$\lim_{n\rightarrow \infty}x=0 \tag{1}$$

Notice how it is formatted somewhat differently in the **displaymath** environment. Now, we'll enter an unnumbered equation:

$$\sum_{i=0}^{\infty} x + 1$$

and follow it with another numbered equation:

$$\sum_{i=0}^{\infty}x_i=\int_{0}^{\pi+2} f \tag{2}$$

just to demonstrate LaTeX's able handling of numbering.

7 FIGURES

Your figures should contain a caption which describes the figure to the reader.

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  \caption{figure caption}
  \Description{figure description}
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```

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9 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Identification of funding sources and other support, and thanks to individuals and groups that assisted in the research and the preparation of the work should be included in an acknowledgment section, which is placed just before the reference section in your document.

This section has a special environment:

```
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...
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```

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10 APPENDICES

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Start the appendix with the "`appendix`" command:

```
\appendix
```

and note that in the appendix, sections are lettered, not numbered. This document has two appendices, demonstrating the section and subsection identification method.

11 SIGCHI EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

The "`sigchi-a`" template style (available only in LaTeX and not in Word) produces a landscape-orientation formatted article, with a wide left margin. Three environments are available for use with the "`sigchi-a`" template style, and produce formatted output in the margin:

- `sidebar`: Place formatted text in the margin.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To Robert, for the bagels and explaining CMYK and color spaces.

A RESEARCH METHODS

A.1 Part One

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A.2 Part Two

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B ONLINE RESOURCES

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