

Fuzzy Hashing Ethereum Smart Contracts

Bachelor's Thesis in Software and Information Engineering

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1. Abstract

Because of the high number of smart contracts deployed every hour, fast classification is needed for analysis of blockchain activity. Fuzzy hashing (similarity preserving hashing) is a popular tool when dealing with large amounts of data. In this work we explore the landscape of binary similarity hashing and evaluate such methods for use on ethereum smart contracts. To aid the process a evaluation framework in python was implemented and sets of pre-classified contracts where defined.

2. Terms

Fuzzy hashing function Function producing similar hashes for similar inputs.

Ethereum The computer network running the EVM.

EVM Ethereum Virtual Machine. There is one EVM with one state. Transactions change the state.

Blockchain Complete record of all transaction.

Transaction Can change account balances, call smart contract functions or deploy smart contracts.

Ethereum account Accounts are uniquely identified by there 20 byte address, have an Ether balance and can execute transactions.

Ether Currency used to pay for the execution of transactions.

Smart Contract An Ethereum account with associated runnable code and data stored on the EVM. Can refer to just the runtime code or the source code or the semantics of the contract interface.

Contract interface Smart Contracts have a set of contract functions callable by other accounts via message or transaction.

Contract function Can change account data and Ether balances and call functions of the same of other contracts via messages.

Meessage Smart contracts can call other contracts functions via messages. Unlike transactions and logs, these messages are not stored on the blockchain.

Logs Smart contracts can create logs, which are stored on the blockchain and can therefore easily be observed and referenced. Decentralized applications are implemented using logs.

Runtime code The runnable code stored on the EVM as a sequence of opcodes. Used synonymously with code or bytecode.

Deployment code Runs once and stores the runtime code.

Opcodes An EVM instruction encoded as one byte.

ABI Standard encoding of the Contract interface.

Function signature String containing function name and parameters types.
E.g.: `deposit(uint256,address)`

Fourbyte signature Function signature hashed to a 4-byte value.

solc Standard Solidity compiler.

Solidity Most commonly used programming language for writing ethereum smart contracts.

3. Introduction

There are various ways of classifying smart contracts, they fall into the two main categories of static analysis and dynamic analysis. Dynamic analysis is concerned with observed runtime behavior, e.g. transactions, messages, contract creation and other temporal associations between accounts. Static analysis is concerned with static properties of the data stored on the EVM.

This work is focused on one type of static data, the runtime code (a.k.a. deployed code) of smart contracts stored on the EVM, which needs to be distinguished from the deployment code used to generate the runtime code. To find associations between runtime codes one can exactly match code skeletons [Sec. 4.2] and extract the fourbyte signatures [Sec. 5.1] of their interface functions, explained in detail in the Section "5.2 Static Analysis" of the paper (Di Angelo et al. 2020b [3]) and quickly contextualized in later sections.

Exact matching skeletons is specific but not sensitive and interface similarity is sensitive but not specific—other methods are desired to fill the gap. For this purpose I looked at the landscape of fuzzy hashing functions.

Related fields are identification of malicious executables, email/comment spam detection, typing auto correction, fuzzy text search, DNA distance metrics and finding video/audio copies and edits.

To obtain similarity scores I preprocessed codes, calculated digests (hashes) and compared those digests via similarity measures.

4. Pre-Processing

Small changes in the codes can cause big changes in the digests—pre-processing aims to remove non-essential parts.

4.1 Segmentation

Segmentation splits the codes into code, data and meta sections [11].

meta sections have no effect on execution and change between compilations.

data sections are e.g. constructor arguments. Constructor-arguments are deployed by the actual contract (first code-section). Generally they're only used for parameter initialization and have no essential effect on the execution. Limiting the possible effectiveness is the fact that detection is heuristic.

The first code section is the actual contract, the other code-sections are in essence just data for the first-section, if it itself deploys further contracts.

4.2 Skeletonization

Skeletons are runtime codes where constructor arguments, data sections, meta sections and push arguments are set to zero [11]. Contracts can be associated via skeletons, because many deployed codes have identical skeletons. Push-operations are the only EVM-instructions followed by data. The reasoning behind this removal is that, these data bytes have no essential effect on the execution, e.g. jump-addresses and ethereum-addresses. Setting the push arguments to zero has the benefit of preserving the ability to disassemble the code.

4.3 Opcode filtering

The same externally observable behavior can be achieved via different opcode sequences. Some opcodes are more likely to change with solc-versions or compile-options than others. Removing less significant opcodes before hashing should yield more meaningful similarity scores.

4.3.a *fStat* Filter

Determining exactly which opcode sequences change, would most likely require a lot of manual work. To quickly and simply distinguish between opcode which are likely to change and ones that don't change I used the *solc-versions-testset* [Sec. 7.1] and reduced the codes to *bytebags* [Sec. 5.6]. Then I calculated an the *One-way ANOVA F-test statistic* (1) for each opcode, using common source-code as grouping criterion and the count of the opcode as value.

To define the *fStat* filter I selected to top 30 opcodes by f-statistic value, plus a few that never occurred or only in one group. See [Sec. 9.2] for the f-statistic values and more details.

$$F = \frac{\text{between group variability}}{\text{within group variability}} \quad (1)$$

```
OPCODES = (  
  # top 30 fStat values  
  ADDRESS, LOG3, TIMESTAMP, ORIGIN, LOG4, SHA3, SWAP14, CALLDATASIZE,  
  CALLDATACOPY, SIGNEXTEND, CALL, LOG2, RETURNDATASIZE, CALLER, EXTCODESIZE,  
  JUMPI, STATICCALL, RETURNDATACOPY, GAS, DUP13, DUP5, DUP8, GASPRICE,  
  SHR, PUSH4, ISZERO, DUP7, ADD, DUP9, MUL,  
  # occurred in only one group  
  XOR, CALLVALUE, DELEGATECALL, SELFDESTRUCT,  
  # never occurred  
  SAR, LOG0, CREATE,  
)
```

5. Digest Methods

5.1 Fourbytes - macro-similarity

The interface of a contract is the set of functions callable by other accounts/contracts. Almost all deployed contracts follow the ABI standard for encoding there interface, which lets the caller select the desired function via a four-byte hash of the function signature. The macro-similarity based on the contract-interface is described in *II.C.2) Interface Restoration* (Di Angelo et al. 2020a [2]).

The digest produced by this method is the set of extracted fourbyte signatures. Similarity scores are obtained via the Jaccard-Index [Sec. 6.1] off these sets.

5.2 ssdeep

ssdeep is a Context Triggered Piecewise Hash (CTPH) based on *spamsum*[12] which was written for email spam detection. It is described in detail in the accompanying paper (Kornblum 2006 [5])

Context Triggered Piecewise Hashes follow the steps:

1. Compute a rolling hash of the last n bytes for every position.
2. The rolling hash is used to determine the cutoff points.
3. The resulting chunks are hashed using a traditional cryptographic hash.
4. The final hash results from concatenating part of the chunk-hashes (e.g. the last byte).

ssdeep compares the hashes via a custom edit-distance and sores similarity from 0 to 100, I divide by 100 to get scores in [0,1].

5.3 ppdeep

To make modifications easy I used a version of *ssdeep* implemented in pure python *ppdeep*[13]. The score calculation differs from the original implementation, but scatter plots [Fig. 8] showed insignificant impact for the purposes of this work. *ppdeep* hashes are compared via Levenshtein distance [Sec. 6.2] and custom weighting to produce a similarity scores in [0,100], I divide by 100 to get scores in [0,1].

5.4 ppdeep_mod

The following modifications were made to *ppdeep*:

- Remove sequence-stripping. It made many hashes incomparable because of long strips of 'K' chunk-hashes.
- Remove rounding in the score calculation to differentiate between exact match and close match as well as incomparable and minor similarity.
- Remove common substring detection to make more hashes comparable.
- Handle case where first chunk is never triggered.
- Add option to use Jaccard-Index for comparison, the default is Levenshtein-similarity.

5.5 jumpHash

Inspired by *ssdeep* and the learnings from the *solc-versions-testset*[7] I implemented *jumpHash* [6], it follows the steps:

1. Split the code by the opcode `JUMPI=0x57` into chunks.
2. Hash each chunk with `sha1`.
3. Map the first byte of the `sha1` hash to a Unicode character.
4. Concatenate the Unicode characters to a hash-string.
5. Compare the hash-strings via Levenshtein-similarity [Sec. 6.2].

```
from hashlib import sha1

def h(b: bytes) -> str:
    return chr(sha1(b).digest()[0] + 0xb0)

def hash(code: bytes) -> str:
    jumpi = b'\x57'
    chunks = code.split(jumpi)
    return ''.join(h(chunk) for chunk in chunks)
```

The Unicode character `°=chr(0xb0)` was chosen as 0 chunk-hash because it is followed by 255 valid characters.

5.6 Bytebag - Opcode Frequency

As lower reference bound for more complex similarity detection I implemented the following measure:

1. Count every byte-value in the code forming a multiset or bag of byte-values, a bytebag.
2. Compare via Jaccard-Index for bags (code below).

```
def byteBag(code: bytes) -> Dict[int,int]:
    def reducer(counts: Dict[int,int], b: int):
        counts[b] = counts[b] + 1 if b in counts else 1
        return counts
    return functools.reduce(reducer, code, {})

def jaccard(a: Dict[int,int], b: Dict[int,int]) -> float:
    return sum(min(a[i], b[i]) for i in range(256)) /
           sum(max(a[i], b[i]) for i in range(256))
```

5.7 LZJD - Lempel-Ziv Jaccard Distance

Designed as a fast approximation of the Normalized Compression Distance (*NCD*) [9], Lempel-Ziv Jaccard Distance (*LZJD*) can be used as alternative to *sdhash* and *ssdeep* [10].

The digest generated by *LZJD* (*LZSet*) is an LZ dictionary, which is a set of sub-sequences, defined by *Algorithm 1* in [9]. Distance is calculated via the Jaccard-Index [Sec. 6.1] on the *LZSets* (2).

$$LZJD(x, y) = 1 - J(LZSet(x), LZSet(y)) \quad (2)$$

I used the *pyLZJD*[8] implementation and calculated similarity instead of distance.

5.8 bzHash

bzHash is based on peHash[14] which calculates the compression ratio for each section of potentially malicious executables to generate a fingerprint. The digest is calculated via the following steps.

1. Split code by JUMPI into chunks.
2. For each chunk: calculate the bz-compression-ratio.
3. Calculate mean and standard-deviation of the ratios.
4. Calculate distance from mean as multiple of the standard-deviation.
5. Clamp values to $[-2, 2]$ standard-deviations from mean.
6. Discretize to positive integer values.
7. Map the integers to characters.
8. Concatenate the characters to the final hash-string.
9. Compare the hash-strings with Levenshtein [Sec. 6.2].

```
import numpy as np
import bz2

def bzCompRatio(code: bytes):
    return len(bz2.compress(code)) / len(code) if len(code) > 0 else 1

_map = '0123456789ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz-_'

def bzHash(code: bytes, chunkRes=4) -> str:
    jumpi = b'\x57'
    res = [bzCompRatio(chunk) for chunk in code.split(jumpi)]
    res = sdFromMean(res)
    return ''.join(_map[discretize(-2, 2, chunkRes, val)] for val in res)

def discretize(mi, ma, resolution, val):
    span = ma - mi
    shifted = val - mi
    scaled = shifted * (resolution / span)
    return max(0, min(resolution - 1, int(scaled)))

def sdFromMean(x: Iterable) -> Iterable:
    x = np.fromiter(x, float)
    if len(x) == 0:
        return x
    elif x.std() == 0:
        return x - x
    return (x - x.mean()) / x.std()
```

6. Similarity Measures

The following methods were used to obtain similarity scores, applied to digests and undigested codes.

6.1 Jaccard-Index

Defined on two sets A and B , the Jaccard-Index J is the ratio of the cardinalities intersection over union. Can be applied to bags (multisets) via the same definition using intersection and union operations for bags.

$$J(A, B) = \frac{|A \cap B|}{|A \cup B|} \in [0, 1] \quad (3)$$

Jaccard was used to compare the digest of LZJD [Sec. 5.7], Fourbyte [Sec. 5.1] and Bytebag [Sec. 5.6].

6.2 Levenshtein Distance

It is also called edit distance, and is defined to be the minimum number of character-inserts, -deletions and -substitutions necessary to change one string into the other.

To be consistent with the other measures I calculated the Levenshtein similarity as follows:

$$\text{similarity}(a, b) = 1 - \frac{\text{distance}(a, b)}{\max\{|a|, |b|\}} \in [0, 1] \quad (4)$$

I used *pyPI* package *python-Levenshtein*[4].

The digests of *ppdeep* [Sec. 5.3], *bzHash* [Sec. 5.8] and *jumpHash* [Sec. 5.5] were compared via Levenshtein similarity. I also applied it on whole codes from the *proxies* dataset [Sec. 7.3]; the codes from the other datasets are too long.

6.3 Normalized Compression Distance NCD

NCD is a measure for how well two files co-compress—the more features two files have in common the shorter the length of the compressed concatenation.

$Z(x)$ is the length of the compressed file x ; xy is the concatenation of x and y .

$$\text{NCD}(x, y) = \frac{Z(xy) - \min\{Z(x), Z(y)\}}{\max\{Z(x), Z(y)\}} \quad (5)$$

I calculated the similarity instead of the distance to be consistent with the other measures.

```
import lzma
```

```
def Z(contents: bytes) -> int:
    return len(lzma.compress(contents, format=lzma.FORMAT_RAW))
```

```
# Simplified Python code: Z(a) is calculated of all codes a before comparing
```

```
def NCD(a: bytes, b: bytes):
    return (Z(a + b) - min(Z(a), Z(b))) / max(Z(a), Z(b))
```

```
def similarity(a: bytes, b: bytes):
    return (Z(a) + Z(b) - Z(a + b)) / max(Z(a), Z(b))
```

I used *NCD* to calculate similarity between whole codes.

6.4 Code Length

To test if the other methods are just an expensive proxy for a length comparison, I obtained a similarity score purely based on the size of the codes.

$$\text{sim}(a, b) = \frac{\min\{|a|, |b|\}}{\max\{|a|, |b|\}} \in [0, 1] \quad (6)$$

7. Data sets

7.1 solc-versions-testset[7]

To evaluate the similarity measures I selected a set of 13 solidity smart contracts and compiled them with different solc versions and compiler options [7]. Necessary changes were made to the source code to ensure compatibility with the various solc versions.

To test the robustness against compiler version the contracts were compiled with the four solc versions 0.5.16, 0.6.12, 0.7.6 and 0.8.4. To evaluate the effect of code optimization, the four optimization-settings {enabled:false, runs:200}, {enabled:true, runs:0}, {enabled:true, runs:200} and {enabled:true, runs:999999} were applied. Finally ABI encoders v1 and v2 were used.

13 source-codes x 4 solc-versions x 4 optimization-settings x 2 abi-encodings \approx 264 codes.

7.1.a Optimization

The runs setting determines whether the compiler optimizes the code for cheap deployment or cheap execution, i.e. cheap deployment code execution or cheap runtime code execution.

To determine the relevant optimization options I calculated a statistic [Tbl. 1] on contracts with verified source available on etherscan.io.

optimization-runs	count	proportion	optimization-enabled
0	1379	0.6 %	31.6 %
1	671	0.3 %	99.0 %
< x <	1804	0.8 %	99.4 %
200	202289	90.3 %	50.0 %
< x	17973	8.0 %	99.2 %
total	224116	100 %	54.4 %

Tbl. 1: optimization setting statistic

7.2 Wallets

Extensive set of wallet contract codes, classified into 40 blueprints via various automated and manual means described in (Angelo et al. 2020 [1]).

This dataset is interesting because it's large, the types are human verified and quite different from each other.

7.3 Proxies

Individual wallets are often implemented via proxy where base functionality is implemented in a blueprint contract, that is called by the proxy. This dataset consists of proxies for the wallets in the wallet dataset.

This dataset is interesting because the codes are extremely short, meaning half the code is data and arguments.

7.4 Small Groups with the same Name and Fourbyte Signatures

A sample of contracts with verified source available on etherscan.io, grouped by same name and ABI signatures. The dataset is comprised of 89 groups. The groups contain 5 to 10 contracts with the same ABI interface and the same name. The groups have distinct ABI interfaces and distinct names. In total there are 541 codes with distinct skeletons and between 15 to 25 interface functions.

8. Test Specification

8.1 Evaluation Framework

The majority of the effort went into creating an Evaluation Framework¹ in python [6]. The idea was to allow for quick comparison of different datasets, pre-processors, pre-processing parameters, digests, digest-parameters, similarity-measures and similarity-parameters as well as plotting and statistical exploration of results.

8.2 Pre-Processing

I tested with the following pre-processing settings.

raw The whole code unprocessed.

fstSec or firstSection The first code section [Sec. 4.1].

skel or skeleton The skeleton of the whole code [Sec. 4.2].

fstSecSkel The skeleton of the first code section.

fStat *fstSecSkel* filtered for the opcodes in the *fStat* filter by cutting out the other opcodes [Sec. 4.3.a].

fStat0 *fStat* but instead of cutting out the other opcodes are set to zero.

fStatV2 *fStat* with a few opcodes removed.

fStat0V2 *fStat0* with a few opcodes removed.

¹<https://github.com/mrNuTz/ethereum-contract-similarity>

8.3 Digest and Similarity Methods

The keywords used in the following sections to identify the pairs of digest and similarity method.

fourbytes Set of fourbyte signatures [Sec. 5.1] scored via Jaccard [Sec. 6.1].
ssdeep *ssdeep* hashes compared via *ssdeep*'s custom edit-distance [Sec. 5.2].
ppdeep *ppdeep* [Sec. 5.3] hashes scored via standard Levenshtein [Sec. 6.2] and *ssdeep*'s scoring logic.
ppdeep_mod *ppdeep* with modified scoring logic [Sec. 5.4].
jump *jumpHash* [Sec. 5.5] scored via Levenshtein similarity [Sec. 6.2].
bytebag Bags of byte-values [Sec. 5.6] scored via Jaccard [Sec. 6.1].
lzjd LZ dictionaries compared via Jaccard [Sec. 5.7].
bz *bzHash* [Sec. 5.8] with Levenshtein similarity [Sec. 6.2].
lev Levenshtein similarity [Sec. 6.2] on whole codes; only used with the small *proxies* codes [Sec. 7.3].
ncd Normalized Compression Distance applied to whole codes [Sec. 6.3].
size Codes compared via there length only [Sec. 6.4].

8.4 Datasets

Specification of the datasets used in the following sections.

solc-versions-testset See [Sec. 7.1].
wallets A subset of the wallets dataset [Sec. 7.2] including one code per unique skeleton.
proxies A subset of proxies dataset [Sec. 7.3] including one code per unique skeleton.
smallGroupsByAbi See [Sec. 7.4].

8.5 Performance Measures

Separation

To quickly evaluate how well the methods distinguish between code-pairs with both codes from the same group and pairs of codes from different groups the separation was defined. It specifies the following ratio. When the pairs are ordered by similarity-score, how many same-group pairs are in the upper window of size total number of same-group pairs.

qDist

As a second measure for the clustering-performance I calculated $qDist(s, c)$ defined as follows.

s ... Ordered similarity-scores of all code pairs where the codes are from the same group.

c ... Ordered similarity-scores of all code pairs where the codes are from different groups.

$Q_n(x)$... Nth quartile of the series x

$Q_2(x)$... Median of the series x .

$$qDist(x, y) = \frac{Q_2(x) - Q_2(y)}{Q_2(x) - Q_1(x) + Q_3(y) - Q_2(y)} \quad (7)$$

8.6 Plots

Violin Plots

Unless otherwise specified the violin plots [Fig. 1] in this work all adhere to the following specification.

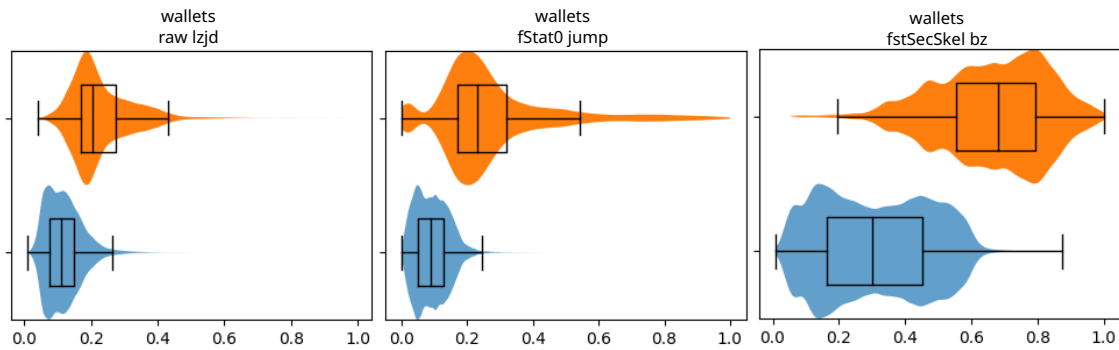


Fig. 1: violin plots

- They show the similarity-scores of all possible code-pairs by on measure.
- The measure (e.g. lzjd) and the pre-processing (e.g. fStat0) is specified in the title.
- The pairs are partitioned into "same" (top violin) and "cross" (bottom violin).
- "same" contains all pairs where the two codes are from the same group.
- "cross" contains all pairs where the two codes are from different groups.
- The x-axis is the similarity-score $\in [0,1]$.
- The box plots show the first, second and third quartile; the whiskers have a length of 1.5 times the inter-quartile-range.

Histograms

Unless otherwise specified the histograms [Fig. 2] in this work all adhere to the following specification.

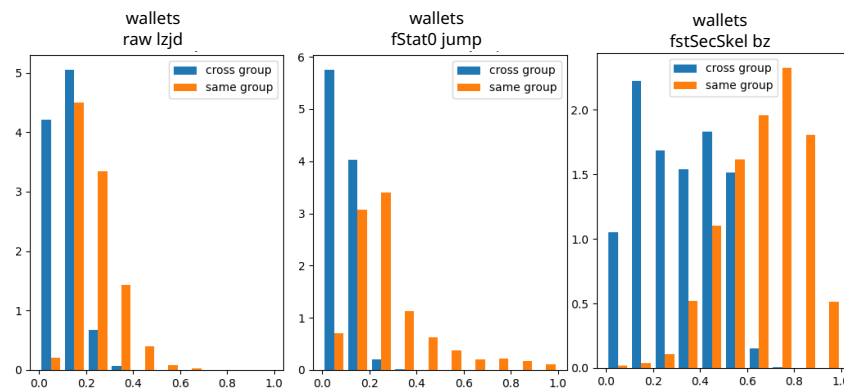


Fig. 2: histograms

- They show the similarity-scores of all possible code-pairs by on measure.
- The measure (e.g. lzjd) and the pre-processing (e.g. fStat0) is specified in the title.
- The pairs are partitioned into "cross group" and "same group".
- "cross group" contains all pairs where the two codes are from different groups.
- "same group" contains all pairs where the two codes are from the same group.
- The x-axis is the similarity-score $\in [0,1]$.
- The y-axis is the density, i.e. the sum of the ten buckets is always ten.
- The "same group" and "cross group" series are plotted separately, i.e. all ten buckets add up to ten for both series separately.

9. Results

9.1 Testrun: Solc Versions Clustered with Bytebag

Data

An older version of the *solc-versions-testset*[7], commit [923fa5bb5abb2939e54fb5404e9e287b1f0f0cec](#). Nine Solidity source files compiled with four solc versions (5, 6, 7, 8) times three optimization settings (no optimization, runs = 1, runs = 999999). Necessary changes were made to the source code to ensure compatibility with the different solc version without altering the function of the contracts.

Pre-Processing

The runtime codes were segmented and the first segment skeletonized and then filtered with the following opcode filter. I defined the filter based on my intuition, for which opcodes are hard to be replaced by others.

```
(OP.is_log() or OP.is_storage() or OP.is_sys_op() or OP.is_env_info()
or OP.is_block_info() or OP == opcodes.SHA3 or OP == opcodes.GAS)
```

```
# GASPRICE CALLER SSTORE TIMESTAMP LOG3 ORIGIN INVALID LOG2 ADDRESS BLOCKHASH STATICCALL
CALLDATALOAD CALL CALLDATASIZE RETURNDATASIZE EXTCODEHASH GAS LOG0 DIFFICULTY CODESIZE
DELEGATECALL CALLVALUE RETURNDATACOPY RETURN NUMBER SELFDESTRUCT CALLCODE REVERT
CALLDATACOPY COINBASE EXTCODESIZE CODECOPY CREATE SHA3 LOG4 SLOAD EXTCODECOPY GASLIMIT
CREATE2 LOG1 BALANCE
```

Similarity

Similarity for all code pairs was calculated via Jaccard Index on the bytebags of the filtered codes.

Clustering

The clustering [Fig. 3a] was done in Gephi (0.9.2) with the settings [Fig. 3b]. Nodes with the same color have the same source code. The graph is fully connected and the edge weights are determined by the similarity scores of the pairs (*byteBag-significantOnly* column in the csv²).

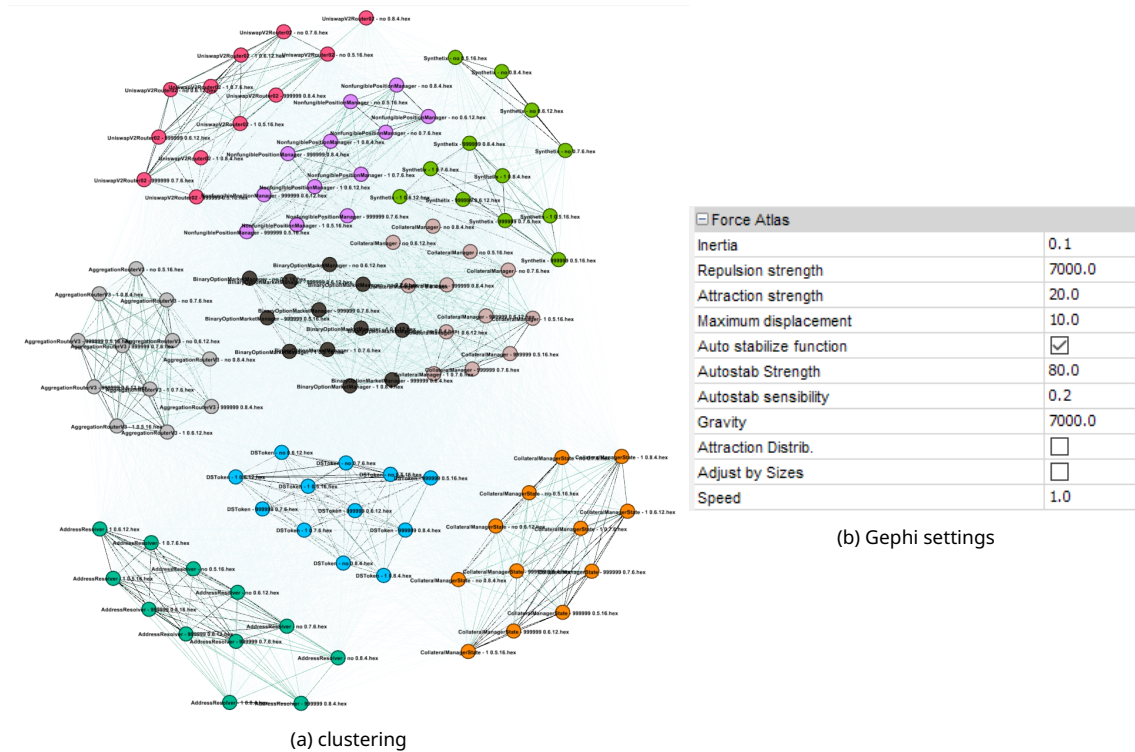


Fig. 3: Clustering of *solc-versions-testset* with *bytebag*

Observation

The clustering algo formed cohesive clusters, mostly due to the fact that the dataset is small and the contracts differ significantly in size alone. Nonetheless, noticeable is that the Synthetix codes without optimization from all 4 solc versions form a cluster separate from the other Synthetix codes [Fig. 4b]. The no optimization variants in the CollateralManagerState cluster also group tightly [Fig. 4a]. UniswapV2Router02 changes significantly from solc 0.7.6 to 0.8.4, one reason is the ABI default changed from v1 to v2, 0.8.4 also has a big table of PUSH and JUMP operations at the end not present in 0.7.6.

Analysis

To further investigate the Synthetix observation I calculated the difference of the opcode frequencies between *Synthetix - no 0.8.4.hex* and *Synthetix - 999999 0.8.4.hex* [Tbl. 2].

Conclusion

Many of the opcodes, I thought significant, show high changes in frequency when optimization is applied, especially the RETURN opcode should not be included in the filter, since optimization drastically reduces its prevalence from 45 to 1.

It seems optimization options change the codes more than solc version changes.

9.2 Testrun: Determine Significant Opcodes

Because my intuition was wrong, a quantitative method for determining significant opcodes was needed.

²https://github.com/mrNuTz/ethereum-contract-similarity/blob/e18e6b01df1efbd3bc4969d9ad999ce1125f3649/runs/byteFiltersOnSolcVersions/out/comparisons_all.csv

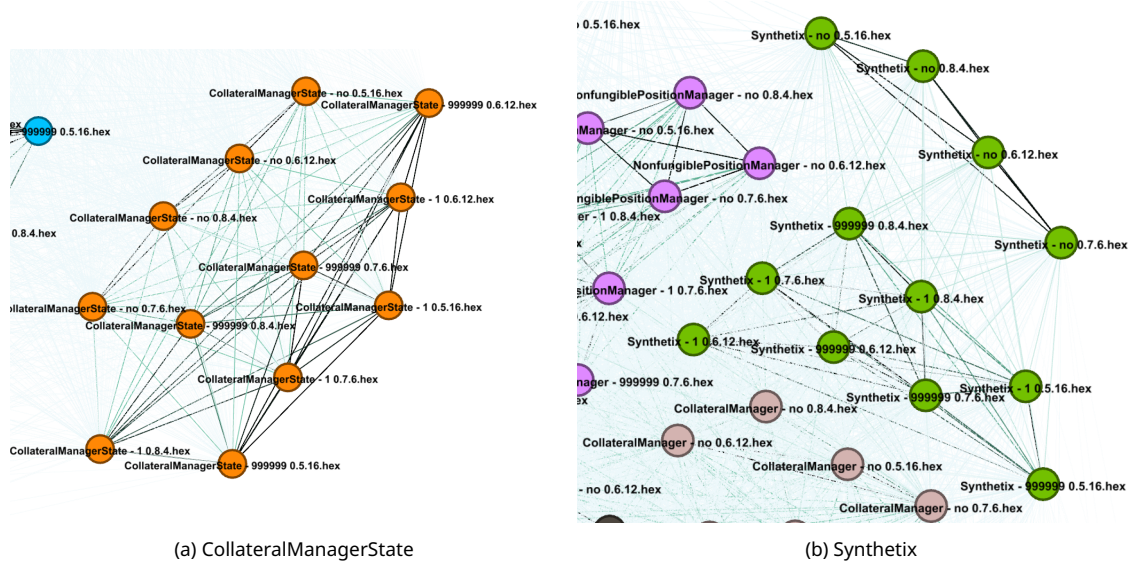


Fig. 4: no optimization

Idea: Find bytes that change more between groups than in groups between codes i.e. bytes with higher between group variance than in group variance. → ANOVA f-statistic

Data

I used the *solc-versions-testset*[7], because codes from the same group behave identically except for gas cost, runtime and storage of intermediate results.

Method

Calculate and f-statistic value for every byte value from 0 to 255, where codes compiled from the same source with different solc-versions and -options form the groups. See ³ for the source-code.

Results

See [Fig. 3] for the opcodes referenced in this work; for the full table see ⁴.

Observations

RETURN has the lowest score of 2.5 confirming the interpretation of the clustering test-run.

JUMPI has a very high score of 845.3 despite its high prevalence of on average 192.8 per contract. It has the 16th highest f-statistic and ist the 11th most prevalent. It also has the 6th highest minimum of 32 occurrences in one contract. Opcodes scoring higher are much less frequent at a max mean of 46. In oder of f-statistic ADD is the next op-code with higher prevalence at rank 28 (f-stat 350.8, mean count 346.1).

ISZERO looks surprisingly significant at an f-statistic of 434.1 and a mean count of 148.1.

Interpretation

The *ABI* function signature jump tables at the beginning of every contract are identical within groups and they contain a high number of JUMPI ops, but they also contains an equal number of PUSH4, DUP1 and EQ ops, which have lower f-stat values of 442.0, 101.7 and 240.4. And the rest of the code does also contain a high number of JUMPI ops.

The ISZERO opcodes are related to JUMPI since conditional jumps of often implemented by combining these two operations. ISZERO might be more relevant since it is not used in the *ABI* section.

Remarks

I first ran this experiment with an older version of *solc-versions-testset*, in which the *ABI* encodings where not fixed programmatically. I noticed that the default encoding changed with solc version 0.8.0 from v1 to v2, causing big changes to the codes—this led me to extend the dataset by the dimension *ABI*

³<https://github.com/mrNuTz/ethereum-contract-similarity/blob/2633cfca61446fe5344a8ee57a2f7d92f18843e3/runs/byteDistribution/run.py>

⁴<https://github.com/mrNuTz/ethereum-contract-similarity/blob/2633cfca61446fe5344a8ee57a2f7d92f18843e3/runs/byteDistribution/out/solcOptions%20f-stat-by-byte.csv>

dec	hex	opcode	o0	runs999999	diff	relDiff
8	0x08	ADDMOD	1	0	-1	-100 %
60	0x3C	EXTCODECOPY	1	0	-1	-100 %
83	0x53	MSTORE8	0	1	1	100 %
105	0x69	PUSH10	0	1	1	100 %
107	0x6B	PUSH12	0	1	1	100 %
117	0x75	PUSH22	0	1	1	100 %
118	0x76	PUSH23	1	0	-1	-100 %
140	0x8C	DUP13	0	2	2	100 %
153	0x99	SWAP10	0	1	1	100 %
163	0xA3	LOG3	0	1	1	100 %
10	0x0A	EXP	88	1	-87	-99 %
243	0xF3	RETURN	45	1	-44	-98 %
0	0x00	STOP	25	1	-24	-96 %
4	0x04	DIV	85	5	-80	-94 %
53	0x35	CALLDATALOAD	6	41	35	85 %
138	0x8A	DUP11	23	6	-17	-74 %
137	0x89	DUP10	31	10	-21	-68 %
103	0x67	PUSH8	6	2	-4	-67 %
136	0x88	DUP9	37	13	-24	-65 %
27	0x1B	SHL	67	24	-43	-64 %
3	0x03	SUB	240	92	-148	-62 %
80	0x50	POP	1366	527	-839	-61 %
2	0x02	MUL	46	18	-28	-61 %
86	0x56	JUMP	1041	410	-631	-61 %
145	0x91	SWAP2	498	205	-293	-59 %
91	0x5B	JUMPDEST	1347	600	-747	-55 %
97	0x61	PUSH2	1876	914	-962	-51 %
28	0x1C	SHR	1	2	1	50 %
100	0x64	PUSH5	2	1	-1	-50 %
139	0x8B	DUP12	10	5	-5	-50 %
141	0x8D	DUP14	1	2	1	50 %
162	0xA2	LOG2	2	1	-1	-50 %
144	0x90	SWAP1	970	490	-480	-49 %
150	0x96	SWAP7	21	11	-10	-48 %
131	0x83	DUP4	302	161	-141	-47 %
115	0x73	PUSH20	202	117	-85	-42 %
25	0x19	NOT	51	30	-21	-41 %
130	0x82	DUP3	427	252	-175	-41 %
127	0x7F	PUSH32	85	142	57	40 %
133	0x85	DUP6	81	51	-30	-37 %
81	0x51	MLOAD	362	239	-123	-34 %
146	0x92	SWAP3	193	128	-65	-34 %
151	0x97	SWAP8	9	6	-3	-33 %
152	0x98	SWAP9	2	3	1	33 %
96	0x60	PUSH1	1972	1319	-653	-33 %
135	0x87	DUP8	79	53	-26	-33 %
134	0x86	DUP7	99	67	-32	-32 %
241	0xF1	CALL	31	21	-10	-32 %
90	0x5A	GAS	65	45	-20	-31 %
62	0x3E	RETURNDATACOPY	66	46	-20	-30 %
250	0xFA	STATICCALL	34	24	-10	-29 %
61	0x3D	RETURNDATASIZE	171	121	-50	-29 %
59	0x3B	EXTCODESIZE	65	46	-19	-29 %
132	0x84	DUP5	110	78	-32	-29 %
82	0x52	MSTORE	282	397	115	29 %
128	0x80	DUP1	778	562	-216	-28 %
149	0x95	SWAP6	33	24	-9	-27 %
21	0x15	ISZERO	340	252	-88	-26 %
161	0xA1	LOG1	4	3	-1	-25 %
18	0x12	SLT	29	22	-7	-24 %
22	0x16	AND	317	241	-76	-24 %
253	0xFD	REVERT	204	156	-48	-24 %
99	0x63	PUSH4	216	167	-49	-23 %
1	0x01	ADD	602	480	-122	-20 %
87	0x57	JUMPI	319	264	-55	-17 %
148	0x94	SWAP5	30	25	-5	-17 %
147	0x93	SWAP4	64	54	-10	-16 %
129	0x81	DUP2	541	457	-84	-16 %
32	0x20	KECCAK256	7	6	-1	-14 %
84	0x54	SLOAD	98	86	-12	-12 %
51	0x33	CALLER	17	15	-2	-12 %
20	0x14	EQ	97	88	-9	-9 %
23	0x17	OR	11	10	-1	-9 %
17	0x11	GT	31	30	-1	-3 %
54	0x36	CALLDATASIZE	46	45	-1	-2 %
16	0x10	LT	28	28	0	0 %
48	0x30	ADDRESS	3	3	0	0 %
52	0x34	CALLVALUE	1	1	0	0 %
55	0x37	CALLDATACOPY	3	3	0	0 %
85	0x55	SSTORE	11	11	0	0 %
254	0xFE	INVALID	1	1	0	0 %

Tbl. 2: Synthetix optimization differences

encoding, by removing the pragma statements selecting the ABI version from the source files and re-injecting them during the generation of the codes.

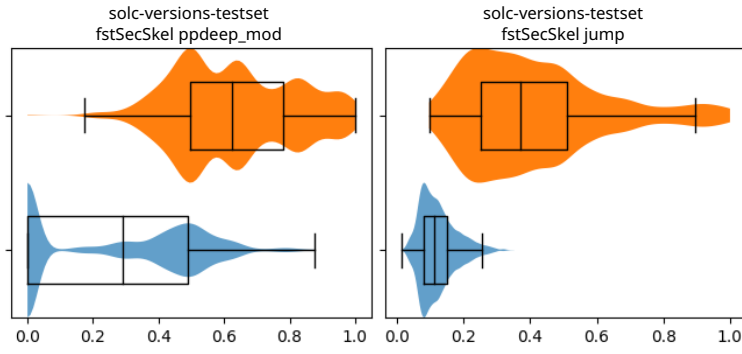


Fig. 5: *solc-versions-testset jump ppdeep_mod*

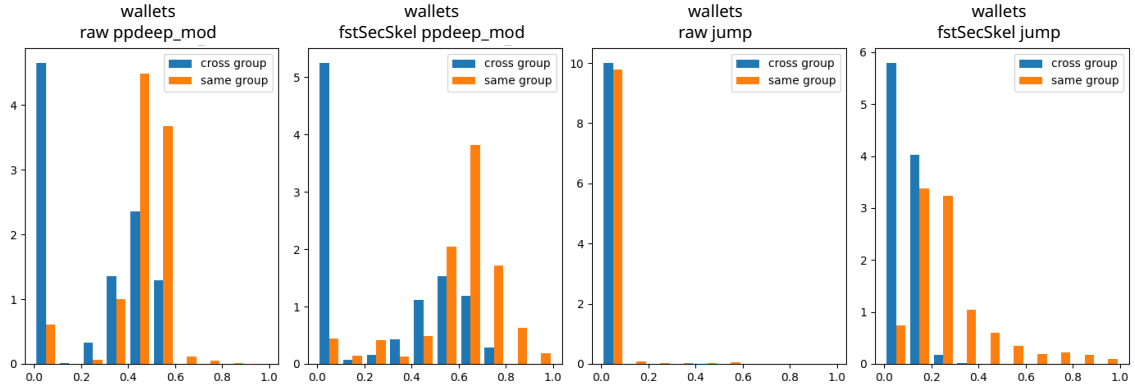


Fig. 6: *fstSecSkel vs. raw on wallets*

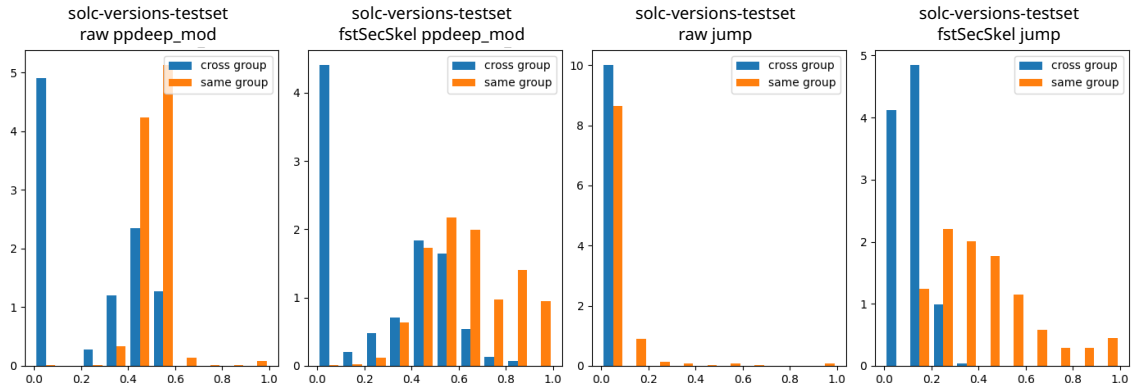


Fig. 7: *fstSecSkel vs. raw on solc-versions-testset*

\mathcal{R} *ppdeep_mod* without sequence striping performs better than *ssdeep* and *ppdeep*.

\mathcal{R} *Levenshtein* works better than *Jaccard* on *ssdeep* hashes, because *Jaccard* reduces the 'K' sequences to one entry.

9.6 ncd and lzjd

\mathcal{H} *ncd* is very flexible, it deals with the very short proxy codes and handles the biggest compile changes better than the other methods.

\mathcal{O} *ncd* comparison is very slow, because all code-pairs need to be compressed together, i.e. *ncd* comparison is performed on the full codes and the other methods compare the much smaller digests, which are calculated only once for each code.

\mathcal{O} When comparing all to all codes hashing runtime becomes insignificant, the comparison of the hashes generally takes much longer, even though individually comparisons are faster than hash calculations.

\mathcal{H} On the short *proxy* codes the chunk-hashes (*jump*, *ssdeep*, *ppdeep*, *bz*) perform poorly; the binary similarity measures (*bytebag*, *lev*, *ncd*, *lzjd*) show better results.

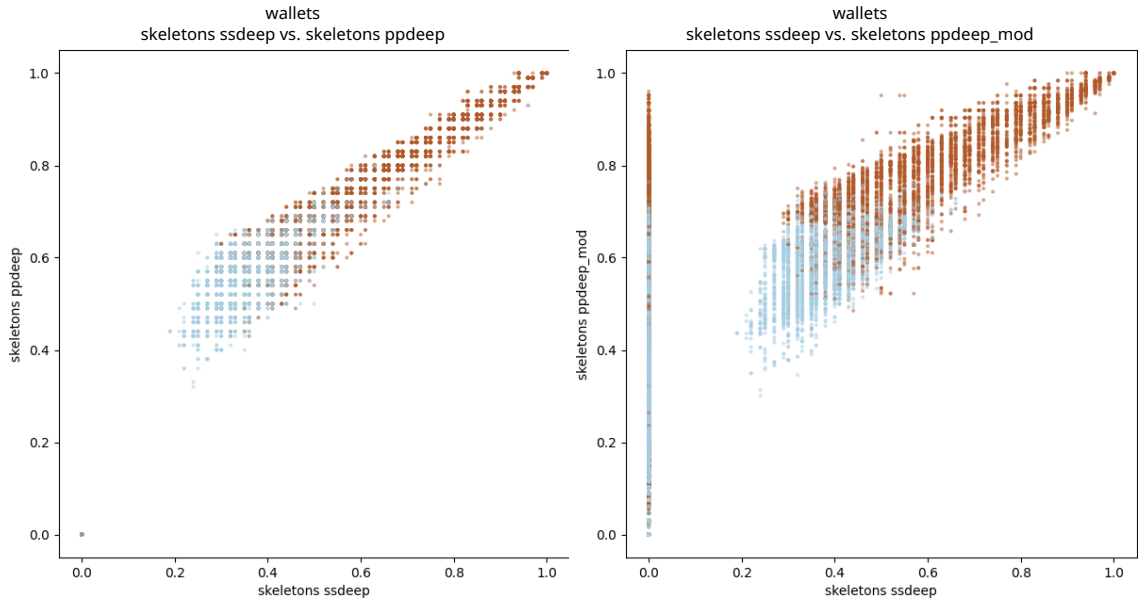


Fig. 8: Scatter plot of ppdeep and ssdeep similarity scores for all wallet code pairs

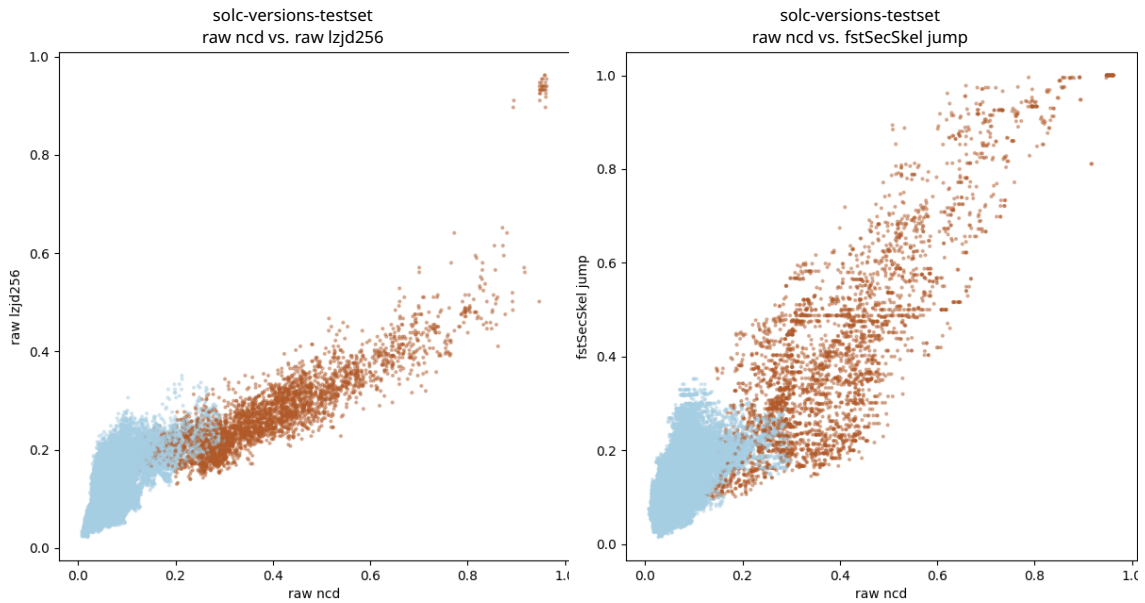


Fig. 9: Scatter plots of *raw ncd* similarity scores for all *solc-versions-testset* code pairs vs. *raw lzjd* (left) and *fstSecSkel jump* (right).

9.7 solc

- O Fourbyte signatures in the jump table at the beginning of all codes are sorted and the functions jumped to are sorted as well.
- O Optimization removes JUMPDEST opcodes.
- O Enabling optimization when compiling with *solc* causes bigger changes to the codes than switching *solc* version.
- O Optimization changes the how the ABI jump table is realized, solely causing significant changes for domain independent similarity measures.
- O Version changes are comparably smaller, but the default ABI encoding changed from v1 to v2 with *solc* version 0.8.0.
- R *Levenshtein* works better than *Jaccard* with chunk-hashes, because *solc* orders functions by signature in the runtime code.

9.8 jump

- H* Considering its simplicity *jump* performs surprisingly well in separating contracts from different groups, partially due to the fact that the number of JUMPI opcodes has a very high *fStat* value.
- O* *jump* correlates strongly with *ncd*, which seems to be more robust to optimization changes, but comparisons take 30 times longer and *jump* separates groups more sharply.
- The nativ Levenshtein implementation used for comparison of *jump* and *bz* digests is the fastest
- O* out of all hash similarities used in this work. Only Jaccard applied to the much shorter *fourbyte* signature sets is faster.

	Preprocess and Hash	qDist		Preprocess and Hash	Separation
1	raw fourbytes	400 %	1	raw fourbytes	99 %
2	fStat jump	161 %	2	fStat jump	80 %
3	fStat0 jump	143 %	3	fStat0 jump	75 %
4	fstSecSkel jump	141 %	4	fStat0 bz	74 %
5	fStat0 bz	138 %	5	fstSecSkel bz	74 %
6	skeletons jump	137 %	6	fstSecSkel jump	74 %
7	fStat byteBag	137 %	7	skeletons jump	72 %
8	fStat0 byteBag	137 %	8	skeletons bz	69 %
9	fstSecSkel bz	136 %	9	fStat bz	68 %
10	fstSecSkel byteBag	129 %	10	fStat byteBag	68 %
11	fStat bz	127 %	11	fStat0 byteBag	68 %
12	raw lzjd	124 %	12	raw bz	67 %
13	raw byteBag	120 %	13	fstSecSkel byteBag	64 %
14	skeletons byteBag	120 %	14	skeletons byteBag	62 %
15	skeletons bz	117 %	15	raw lzjd	61 %
16	raw bz	116 %	16	fstSecSkel ppdeep_mod	54 %
17	skeletons ppdeep_mod	106 %	17	skeletons ppdeep_mod	54 %
18	fstSecSkel ppdeep_mod	105 %	18	fstSecSkel lzjd	53 %
19	fstSecSkel lzjd	103 %	19	skeletons lzjd	52 %
20	skeletons lzjd	100 %	20	raw byteBag	51 %
21	raw ppdeep_mod	87 %	21	fStat ppdeep_mod	44 %
22	fStat ppdeep_mod	87 %	22	raw ppdeep_mod	42 %
23	fStat0 lzjd	76 %	23	fStat0 lzjd	40 %
24	fStat0 ppdeep_mod	49 %	24	fStat ssdeep	36 %
25	raw jump	0 %	25	fStat ppdeep	36 %
26	raw ssdeep	0 %	26	fStat0 ssdeep	34 %
27	raw ppdeep	0 %	27	fStat0 ppdeep	34 %
28	skeletons ssdeep	0 %	28	fstSecSkel ssdeep	33 %
29	skeletons ppdeep	0 %	29	fstSecSkel ppdeep	33 %
30	skeletons fourbytes	0 %	30	skeletons ssdeep	32 %
31	fstSecSkel ssdeep	0 %	31	skeletons ppdeep	32 %
32	fstSecSkel ppdeep	0 %	32	fStat0 ppdeep_mod	31 %
33	fstSecSkel fourbytes	0 %	33	raw ssdeep	31 %
34	fStat ssdeep	0 %	34	raw ppdeep	31 %
35	fStat ppdeep	0 %	35	skeletons fourbytes	30 %
36	fStat fourbytes	0 %	36	fstSecSkel fourbytes	30 %
37	fStat0 ssdeep	0 %	37	fStat fourbytes	30 %
38	fStat0 ppdeep	0 %	38	fStat0 fourbytes	30 %
39	fStat0 fourbytes	0 %	39	raw jump	25 %
40	fStat lzjd	-1 %	40	fStat lzjd	13 %

Tbl. 4: *wallet* dataset *qDists* and *separations*

	Preprocess and Hash	qDist		Preprocess and Hash	Separation
1	raw ncd	279 %	1	raw ncd	89 %
2	fstSecSkel ncd	182 %	2	raw bz	75 %
3	skeletons ncd	182 %	3	fstSecSkel ncd	75 %
4	fstSecSkel jump	164 %	4	skeletons ncd	75 %
5	skeletons jump	163 %	5	skeletons jump	75 %
6	raw lzjd	158 %	6	fstSecSkel jump	75 %
7	raw bz	148 %	7	raw lzjd	72 %
8	skeletons bz	142 %	8	skeletons bz	72 %
9	fstSecSkel bz	138 %	9	fstSecSkel bz	70 %
10	skeletons lzjd	137 %	10	fstSecSkel lzjd	58 %
11	fstSecSkel lzjd	134 %	11	skeletons lzjd	58 %
12	skeletons byteBag	126 %	12	skeletons byteBag	53 %
13	fstSecSkel byteBag	126 %	13	fstSecSkel byteBag	53 %
14	raw byteBag	116 %	14	fstSecSkel ppdeep_mod	51 %
15	raw ppdeep_mod	106 %	15	skeletons ppdeep_mod	50 %
16	fstSecSkel ppdeep_mod	102 %	16	raw byteBag	46 %
17	skeletons ppdeep_mod	101 %	17	raw ppdeep_mod	38 %
18	raw ssdeep	0 %	18	fstSecSkel ppdeep	32 %
19	raw ppdeep	0 %	19	skeletons ppdeep	32 %
20	skeletons ssdeep	0 %	20	skeletons ssdeep	32 %
21	skeletons ppdeep	0 %	21	fstSecSkel ssdeep	32 %
22	fstSecSkel ssdeep	0 %	22	raw jump	30 %
23	fstSecSkel ppdeep	0 %	23	raw ssdeep	12 %
24	raw jump	-12 %	24	raw ppdeep	12 %

Tbl. 5: *solc-versions-testset* *qDists* and *separations*

Preprocess and Hash			qDist	Preprocess and Hash			Separation
1	fStat byteBag		97 %	1	raw ncd		53 %
2	fStat0 byteBag		97 %	2	skeletons ncd		52 %
3	fStat lev		89 %	3	fStat lev		52 %
4	fStat0 ncd		85 %	4	raw lev		50 %
5	skeletons ncd		78 %	5	fstSecSkel ncd		50 %
6	fstSecSkel ncd		76 %	6	fStat byteBag		48 %
7	raw byteBag		75 %	7	fStat0 byteBag		48 %
8	raw ncd		73 %	8	fStat0 lev		48 %
9	raw lev		68 %	9	skeletons byteBag		47 %
10	skeletons byteBag		68 %	10	fstSecSkel byteBag		47 %
11	fstSecSkel byteBag		68 %	11	fstSecSkel lev		45 %
12	raw lzjd		66 %	12	skeletons lev		44 %
13	fStat ncd		58 %	13	fStat jump		42 %
14	skeletons lev		57 %	14	fStat ncd		42 %
15	fStat0 lev		53 %	15	fStat0 ncd		42 %
16	raw fourbyte		50 %	16	raw byteBag		39 %
17	fstSecSkel lzjd		48 %	17	raw lzjd		39 %
18	raw ppdeep_mod		45 %	18	skeletons bz		39 %
19	fstSecSkel lev		44 %	19	raw ppdeep_mod		36 %
20	skeletons lzjd		44 %	20	skeletons lzjd		36 %
21	fStat0 lzjd		40 %	21	skeletons ssdeep		34 %
22	fStat lzjd		40 %	22	skeletons ppdeep		34 %
23	fstSecSkel bz		31 %	23	fstSecSkel ssdeep		34 %
24	fStat0 bz		31 %	24	fstSecSkel ppdeep		34 %
25	raw bz		25 %	25	fstSecSkel bz		34 %
26	skeletons bz		25 %	26	fStat0 bz		33 %
27	fStat jump		22 %	27	raw bz		31 %
28	fStat bz		15 %	28	fstSecSkel lzjd		31 %
29	fstSecSkel ppdeep_mod		14 %	29	raw ssdeep		30 %
30	fStat0 ppdeep_mod		14 %	30	raw ppdeep		30 %
31	fStat ppdeep_mod		13 %	31	skeletons ppdeep_mod		30 %
32	skeletons ppdeep_mod		8 %	32	fstSecSkel ppdeep_mod		30 %
33	raw ssdeep		0 %	33	fStat bz		30 %
34	raw ppdeep		0 %	34	fStat0 lzjd		30 %
35	raw jump		0 %	35	fstSecSkel jump		27 %
36	skeletons ssdeep		0 %	36	fStat0 jump		27 %
37	skeletons ppdeep		0 %	37	fStat0 ssdeep		25 %
38	skeletons jump		0 %	38	fStat0 ppdeep		25 %
39	skeletons fourbyte		0 %	39	skeletons jump		23 %
40	fstSecSkel ssdeep		0 %	40	fStat lzjd		20 %
41	fstSecSkel ppdeep		0 %	41	fStat ppdeep_mod		19 %
42	fstSecSkel jump		0 %	42	fStat0 ppdeep_mod		19 %
43	fstSecSkel fourbyte		0 %	43	fStat ppdeep		13 %
44	fStat ssdeep		0 %	44	raw fourbyte		11 %
45	fStat ppdeep		0 %	45	fStat ssdeep		11 %
46	fStat fourbyte		0 %	46	raw jump		8 %
47	fStat0 ssdeep		0 %	47	skeletons fourbyte		6 %
48	fStat0 ppdeep		0 %	48	fstSecSkel fourbyte		6 %
49	fStat0 jump		0 %	49	fStat fourbyte		6 %
50	fStat0 fourbyte		0 %	50	fStat0 fourbyte		6 %

Tbl. 6: proxies dataset *qDists* and *separations*

9.9 lzjd

\mathcal{H} The similarity numbers for ‘same’ and ‘cross’ pairs look close [Fig. 10][Fig. 11] but *raw lzjd* scores high in the *separation* and *qDist* comparison [Tbl. 4][Tbl. 5].

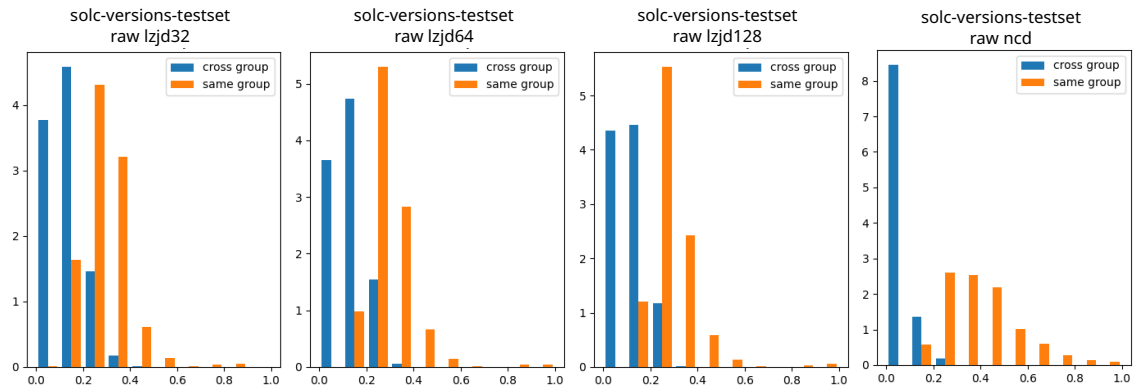


Fig. 10: *lzjd*[32,64,128] on all *raw solc-versions-testset* codes

\mathcal{H} *lzjd* works better with *raw* codes and 256 is a good default *hash_size* setting [Tbl. 7][Tbl. 8][Fig. 12].

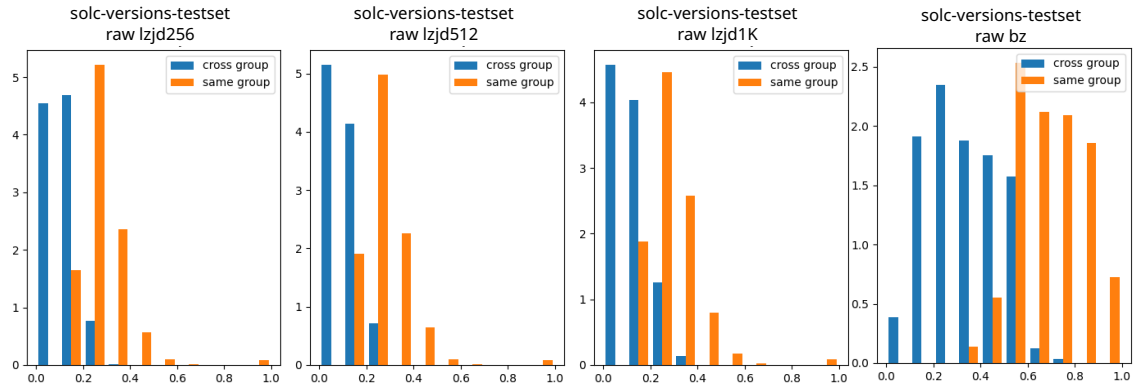


Fig. 11: *lzjd*[256,512,1K] on all *raw solc-versions-testset* codes

Preprocess and Hash			qDist	Preprocess and Hash			Separation
1	raw	lzjd256	158 %	1	raw	lzjd256	72 %
2	raw	lzjd512	157 %	2	raw	lzjd512	72 %
3	raw	lzjd128	157 %	3	raw	lzjd128	70 %
4	raw	lzjd64	156 %	4	raw	lzjd64	64 %
5	raw	lzjd1K	148 %	5	skel	lzjd32	59 %
6	skel	lzjd1K	143 %	6	skel	lzjd256	58 %
7	skel	lzjd64	141 %	7	raw	lzjd32	57 %
8	raw	lzjd32	139 %	8	skel	lzjd64	57 %
9	skel	lzjd512	138 %	9	skel	lzjd512	56 %
10	skel	lzjd256	134 %	10	skel	lzjd128	56 %
11	skel	lzjd32	133 %	11	raw	lzjd1K	55 %
12	skel	lzjd128	131 %	12	skel	lzjd1K	50 %

Tbl. 7: *lzjd* qDists and separations on all codes from *solc-versions-testset*

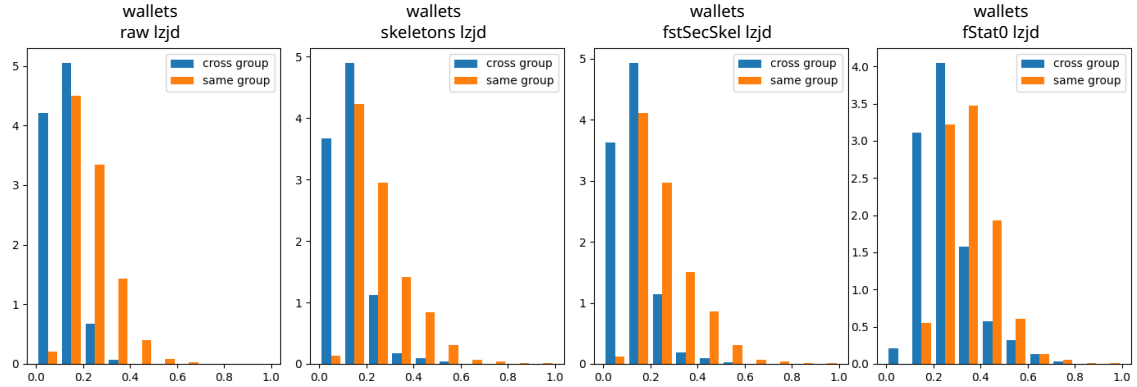


Fig. 12: *lzjd*[256] on *wallets* dataset with different pre-processing methods

Preprocess and Hash			qDist	Preprocess and Hash			Separation
1	raw	lzjd	124 %	1	raw	lzjd	61 %
2	fstSecSkel	lzjd	103 %	2	fstSecSkel	lzjd	53 %
3	skeletons	lzjd	100 %	3	skeletons	lzjd	52 %
4	fStat0	lzjd	76 %	4	fStat0	lzjd	40 %
5	fStat	lzjd	-1 %	5	fStat	lzjd	13 %

Tbl. 8: *lzjd* qDists and separations on all *wallet* codes

9.10 bytebag

O *Bytebag* is simple and fast, yet it seems to be a useful way to determine similarity.

10. Remarks

Evaluation Framework

Quickly re-runnable scripts with few dependencies keep things consistent, but splitting data generation and plot rendering would have allowed faster exploration of the data.

Not using any command line arguments and committing out files to the git repository turned out to be a good decision in my opinion, because this way input and output can easily be associated.

11. Conclusion

Next Steps

Studying code pairs where different methods yield disagreeing scores.

Clustering codes known to be similar to see if further subdivision is meaningful.

Combinational similarity scores starting with fast methods like *fourbyte* and *bytebag*.

Extend *solc-versions-testset* by renaming functions, this results in changed *fourbyte* signatures, in turn leading to a reordering of the code, due to *solc* ordering functions by signature.

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