

Cryptanalysis of Shi's White-box Encryption Scheme

HYOUNGSHIN YIM¹, YONGJIN YEOM^{1,2}, AND JU-SUNG KANG^{1,2}

¹Department of Financial information security, Kookmin University, Seoul 02707, South Korea

²Department of Information Security, Cryptology, and Mathematics Kookmin University, Seoul 02707, South Korea

Corresponding author: Yongjin Yeom (e-mail: salt@kookmin.ac.kr).

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ABSTRACT Structural analysis is the study of finding component functions for a given function. In this paper, we proceed with structural analysis of structures consisting of the S (nonlinear Substitution) layer and the A (Affine or linear) layer. Our main interest is the $S^{(2)} \circ A \circ S^{(1)}$ structure with different substitution layers and large input/output sizes. The purpose of our structural analysis is to find the functionally equivalent oracle F^* and its component functions for a given encryption oracle $F = S^{(2)} \circ A \circ S^{(1)}$. As a result, we can construct the decryption oracle F^{*-1} explicitly and break the one-wayness of the building blocks used in a White-box implementation. Our attack consists of two steps: S layer recovery using multiset properties and A layer recovery using differential properties. We present the attack algorithm for each step and estimate the time complexity. Finally, we discuss the applicability of $S^{(2)} \circ A \circ S^{(1)}$ structural analysis in a White-box Cryptography environment.

INDEX TERMS Cryptanalysis, Structural analysis, White-box cryptography, White-box Implementation

I. INTRODUCTION

CRYPTOGRAPHIC technology is widely used in information and communication services for data protection and authentication. In encryption technology, encryption keys are essential for data and information and communication services authentication.

- Intro. to WBC
- Shi's model
- Structural analysis
- Our contribution

The security of the cryptosystem can be guaranteed only when the encryption key is safely protected from various attackers. The attacker models that threaten the security of cryptosystems include black-box attacks, gray-box attacks, and white-box attacks. The black-box attack is carried out through input and output values in unknown assumptions inside the cryptosystem. The gray-box attack is a technique that acquires and attacks side-channel information such as a cryptographic module's power and electromagnetic waves. Among them, the white-box attack assumes the most potent attacker. The white-box attack is a model in which an attacker takes control of the cryptosystem and neutralizes the cryptography. For example, there are dump and change of memory or register, monitoring the execution process, and

the like. This has attracted attention to protect encryption keys used for copyright protection from exposure in media players and set-top boxes. Currently, the scope of use is expanding due to the safe execution of financial applications in a mobile environment and the prevention of firmware forgery in embedded devices [1]. In 2002, Chow et al [2, 3], suggested the possibility of white-box cryptography of AES (Advanced Encryption Standard) and DES (Data Encryption Standard) along with the concept of white-box attackers, and various white-box cryptography technologies were proposed after that. The security of white-box cryptography generally aims at all or part of preventing exposure to encryption keys, one-wayness of encryption or decryption, and preventing the reproduction of cryptosystems [4]. It was analyzed that most of the white-box cryptography designed in a table reference method, including white-box cryptography such as Chow, does not satisfy any security goals. In general, one-wayness, the security of the white-box, cannot be maintained based on the analysis results of the SASAS structure consisting of the non-linear function S-box and the affine function proposed by Biruykov et al. [6, 7]. The analysis results of structures other than the SASAS structure are also the same. However, various attempts are still underway, and white-box cryptographic products that adopt undisclosed techniques are

also actively spreading [5]. This paper proposes an attack method on the light-weight white-box encryption scheme for securing distributed embedded devices presented by Shi et al. to IEEE Transaction on Computers in 2019 [8]. The LW-WBC (Light-Weight White-Box Cryptography) proposed by Shi et al. has a Feistel structure and protects the input and output value of the XOR (exclusive or) operation by using a table reference method in each round. In addition, it was argued that it was safe against the existing white-box attack method. The LW-WBC, a 60-bit $S^{(1)}AS^{(2)}$ structure with different nonlinear S-box sizes, increases attack complexity and enhances security by not exposing the linear functions used. However, as a result of applying Biruykov's SASAS structural analysis, it was confirmed that the inverse functions of each round could be efficiently obtained [8]. This cannot guarantee one-wayness, which is the security of the white-box cryptography. This paper presents the existing white-box cryptographic model and structural analysis studies. First, we implement LW-WBC based on C language and analyze the security evidence claimed by Shi. After that, we present the structural analysis algorithm of the $S^{(1)}AS^{(2)}$ structure and calculate the attack complexity based on it. Finally, the attack is carried out by applying structural analysis to the LW-WBC using Python language. The results of this study can be used in commercialized white-box cryptographic models with $S^{(1)}AS^{(2)}$ structures.

II. WHITE-BOX CRYPTOGRAPHY AND STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

White-box cryptographic model uses obfuscation techniques by applying encoding to plaintext, ciphertext, and intermediate values. Various white-box cryptographic model design studies are underway, starting with the symmetric key cryptography AES white-box cryptographic model proposed in 2002 [2]. This white-box cryptographic model is very closely related to cryptographic logic, structural analysis. Structural analysis is a study that started with a different motive than white-box cryptography. This section examines the research trend of the white-box cryptographic model. In addition, we look at the structural analysis research trend closely related to the security of white-box cryptography.

A. RESEARCH TRENDS IN WHITE-BOX CRYPTOGRAPHY

Chow et al. proposed AES' white-box cryptographic model in 2002 and presented a design idea that binds fixed encryption keys into tables, including XOR (exclusive-or) operations. Chow's design ideas are the basis for designing the white-box cryptographic model to date. However, it is not safe with a BGE attack [9], and encryption keys can be extracted by analyzing the table reference method regardless of whether encoding and obfuscation are applied. This is enough to obtain an encryption key from a given table in a few seconds in a PC environment. After that, there have been various studies to supplement Chow's white-box design, but most attack methods have been proposed within

TABLE 1. Designs and Attacks in Whitebox cryptography

Whitebox Cryptography	Design	Attack
Whitebox AES	Chow (2002)	Billet (2004)
Whitebox DES	Chow (2002)	(2007)
Perturbated White-box AES	(2006)	(2010)
White-box AES with large linear encoding	(2009)	(2013)

a few years. Xiao, Lai [10] presented 16-bit, 32-bit linear function encoding to improve the weakness of 4-bit unit non-linear encoding in the table reference method. Still, a linear equivalence transformation attack method was discovered by Mulder et al. [11]. In addition, in 2020, vulnerabilities were found in the method of obfuscating the round boundary and adding dummy rounds proposed by Xu et al. [12]. As shown in TABLE I, research on white-box cryptography, which has been steadily improved in table reference methods, has continued until recently [13].

To overcome the limitations of white-box cryptography for standard cryptography, research is also underway to propose white-box cryptography and a suitable cryptographic algorithm. This started in earnest with introducing the space-hard concept by Bogdanov et al. [14] in 2015. WEM (standing for white-box Even-Mansoor) of Chow et al. [26] proposed a new security concept and operation mode of white-box cryptography. Kwon et al. [27] announced FPL (Feistel cipher using Parallel table Look-ups) block ciphers that combine provable security using parallel table reference methods. Along with developing algorithms suitable for this white-box, the security concept was also discussed from various perspectives. Wyseur [4], Saxena [28] in 2009, and Delerablee et al. [29] in 2013 summarized the security concept that white-box cryptography should satisfy, but most of them are difficult to achieve. In 2020, Bock et al. [30, 31] proposed a security concept considering a practical environment and summarized the security of white-box cryptography based on HW-binding and SW-binding. There are various viewpoints on the security concept and goal of white-box cryptography, and commercial products mainly use private white-box cryptography technology that combines solid obfuscation [5, 32, 33]. The white-box cryptography design is also utilized in SM4, a Chinese standard block cipher algorithm. Various designs and analyses of white-box cryptography are in progress in China. Xiao, Lai [18] and Shang [24] and Yao, Chen [25] designed a white-box cryptography model based on SM4 in 2009, 2016, and 2020, but based on a collision attack, the results were announced that it is difficult to maintain security through the analysis method [19]. As a similar research case, an SM4-based light-weight white-box cryptography model suitable for WSNs (Wireless Sensor Networks) environment was proposed by Shi, Yang et al. in 2015. In 2019, a light-weight white-box cryptographic model suitable for distributed resource systems and combining non-linear and affine functions was proposed [22, 8]. However, a vulnerability in the white-box cryptographic model was

TABLE 2. Structural analysis of Substitution-Affine Iterations

Year	Topic	Authors
2001	Structural cryptanalysis of SASAS	A Biryukov et al.
2003	Affine Equivalence Algorithm	A Biryukov et al.
2015	Structural cryptanalysis of ASASA	I Dinur et al.
2015	Analytic Tools for White-box Cryptography	C.H. Baek et al.
2018	An improved Affine Equivalence Algorithm	I Dinur

discovered in WSNs through collision-based attacks in 2021 [23]. The white-box cryptographic model proposed in 2019 can confirm its applicability to structural analysis attack [7].

B. RESEARCH TRENDS IN STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

White-box cryptography is closely related to cryptographic logic, structural analysis. In 1997, Paratin et al. [34] attempted to create the function of public-key cryptography by combining S-box, which is the secret key cryptography logic, and higher-order polynomials. However, although it did not yield successful results, it led to a systematic structural analysis study in the future. As shown in TABLE II, security analysis is conducted on functions of various structures in which nonlinear and affine layers (or linear) with multiple S-boxes alternately appear.

Structural analysis is a study of a method of determining each component under conditions in which the structure of a function is known, but the specific function of each component is unknown. In other words, it is a technique of creating an equivalent function having the same function using only the input/output value of a given oracle function. In 2001, Biryukov et al. [6] considered a function of the SASAS structure as an oracle and discovered a way to find an oracle of the same structure with equal functionality. Using this method, you can discover the encryption key hidden inside the SASAS structure. Most of the white-box cryptography using the table reference method can be attacked by this analysis method. The BGE attack [9] can also be interpreted as this analysis method. Baek et al. proposed a toolbox that generalized structural analysis and presented systematic and quantitative attacks on various structures. This structural analysis has expanded its research to various structures such as ASASA and SASASASAS. Typical attacks on white-box cryptography include obtaining encryption keys and attacking one-wayness properties by constructing a decryption algorithm for a given encryption system. White-box cryptography, which combines non-linear and affine functions into tables, is difficult to maintain security through structural analysis. However, various studies are still in progress to design a white-box encryption model based on one-wayness.

III. SHI'S WHITE-BOX CRYPTOGRAPHY

In 2019, Shi et al. proposed a light-weight white-box encryption scheme for light-weight embedded devices including mobile phones and navigating systems. We denote this scheme by LW-WBES. In fact, LW-WBES is a block cipher with the following features:

- 120 bit block size (input/output size)

- 16(default), 10(aggressive), or 32(conservative) rounds depending on the security level
- variants of Feistel network
- two types of keys: black-box key and white-box key

The design

- Design rationale
- specification of WB encryption scheme
- Security claim

IV. STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF $S^{(1)}AS^{(2)}$

- Intro. to structural analysis
- brief history
- Our result

V. CRYPTANALYSIS OF SHI'S ALGORITHM

- round inversion
- Attack algorithm of plaintext recovery attack
- Experimental results
- Possible countermeasures

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The word “data” is plural, not singular. The subscript for the permeability of vacuum μ_0 is zero, not a lowercase letter “o.” The term for residual magnetization is “remanence”; the adjective is “remanent”; do not write “remnance” or “remnant.” Use the word “micrometer” instead of “micron.” A graph within a graph is an “inset,” not an “insert.” The word “alternatively” is preferred to the word “alternately” (unless you really mean something that alternates). Use the word “whereas” instead of “while” (unless you are referring to simultaneous events). Do not use the word “essentially” to mean “approximately” or “effectively.” Do not use the word “issue” as a euphemism for “problem.” When compositions are not specified, separate chemical symbols by en-dashes; for example, “NiMn” indicates the intermetallic compound Ni_{0.5}Mn_{0.5} whereas “Ni–Mn” indicates an alloy of some composition Ni_{*x*}Mn_{1–*x*}.

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TABLE 3. Units for Magnetic Properties

Symbol	Quantity	Conversion from Gaussian and CGS EMU to SI ^a
Φ	magnetic flux	$1 \text{ Mx} \rightarrow 10^{-8} \text{ Wb} = 10^{-8} \text{ V}\cdot\text{s}$
B	magnetic flux density, magnetic induction	$1 \text{ G} \rightarrow 10^{-4} \text{ T} = 10^{-4} \text{ Wb/m}^2$
H	magnetic field strength	$1 \text{ Oe} \rightarrow 10^3/(4\pi) \text{ A/m}$
m	magnetic moment	$1 \text{ erg/G} = 1 \text{ emu}$ $\rightarrow 10^{-3} \text{ A}\cdot\text{m}^2 = 10^{-3} \text{ J/T}$
M	magnetization	$1 \text{ erg/(G}\cdot\text{cm}^3) = 1 \text{ emu/cm}^3$ $\rightarrow 10^3 \text{ A/m}$
$4\pi M$	magnetization	$1 \text{ G} \rightarrow 10^3/(4\pi) \text{ A/m}$
σ	specific magnetization	$1 \text{ erg/(G}\cdot\text{g)} = 1 \text{ emu/g} \rightarrow 1 \text{ A}\cdot\text{m}^2/\text{kg}$
j	magnetic dipole moment	$1 \text{ erg/G} = 1 \text{ emu}$ $\rightarrow 4\pi \times 10^{-10} \text{ Wb}\cdot\text{m}$
J	magnetic polarization	$1 \text{ erg/(G}\cdot\text{cm}^3) = 1 \text{ emu/cm}^3$ $\rightarrow 4\pi \times 10^{-4} \text{ T}$
χ, κ	susceptibility	$1 \rightarrow 4\pi$
χ_ρ	mass susceptibility	$1 \text{ cm}^3/\text{g} \rightarrow 4\pi \times 10^{-3} \text{ m}^3/\text{kg}$
μ	permeability	$1 \rightarrow 4\pi \times 10^{-7} \text{ H/m}$ $= 4\pi \times 10^{-7} \text{ Wb/(A}\cdot\text{m)}$
μ_r	relative permeability	$\mu \rightarrow \mu_r$
w, W	energy density	$1 \text{ erg/cm}^3 \rightarrow 10^{-1} \text{ J/m}^3$
N, D	demagnetizing factor	$1 \rightarrow 1/(4\pi)$

Vertical lines are optional in tables. Statements that serve as captions for the entire table do not need footnote letters.

^aGaussian units are the same as cg emu for magnetostatics; Mx = maxwell, G = gauss, Oe = oersted; Wb = weber, V = volt, s = second, T = tesla, m = meter, A = ampere, J = joule, kg = kilogram, H = henry.

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A conclusion section is not required. Although a conclusion may review the main points of the paper, do not replicate the abstract as the conclusion. A conclusion might elaborate on the importance of the work or suggest applications and extensions.

Appendixes, if needed, appear before the acknowledgment.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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SECOND B. AUTHOR was born in Greenwich Village, New York, NY, USA in 1977. He received the B.S. and M.S. degrees in aerospace engineering from the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, in 2001 and the Ph.D. degree in mechanical engineering from Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA, in 2008.

From 2001 to 2004, he was a Research Assistant with the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory.

Since 2009, he has been an Assistant Professor with the Mechanical Engineering Department, Texas A&M University, College Station. He is the author of three books, more than 150 articles, and more than 70 inventions. His research interests include high-pressure and high-density nonthermal plasma discharge processes and applications, microscale plasma discharges, discharges in liquids, spectroscopic diagnostics, plasma propulsion, and innovation plasma applications. He is an Associate Editor of the journal *Earth, Moon, Planets*, and holds two patents.

Dr. Author was a recipient of the International Association of Geomagnetism and Aeronomy Young Scientist Award for Excellence in 2008, and the IEEE Electromagnetic Compatibility Society Best Symposium Paper Award in 2011.



THIRD C. AUTHOR, JR. (M'87) received the B.S. degree in mechanical engineering from National Chung Cheng University, Chiayi, Taiwan, in 2004 and the M.S. degree in mechanical engineering from National Tsing Hua University, Hsinchu, Taiwan, in 2006. He is currently pursuing the Ph.D. degree in mechanical engineering at Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, USA.

From 2008 to 2009, he was a Research Assistant with the Institute of Physics, Academia Sinica, Tapei, Taiwan. His research interest includes the development of surface processing and biological/medical treatment techniques using nonthermal atmospheric pressure plasmas, fundamental study of plasma sources, and fabrication of micro- or nanostructured surfaces.

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