

# Demand Driven Information Flow Analysis of WebView in Android Hybrid Apps

Accepted at ISSRE'23@Florence

Jyoti Prakash\*  
OpenText India

Abhishek Tiwari\*  
University of  
Southern Denmark

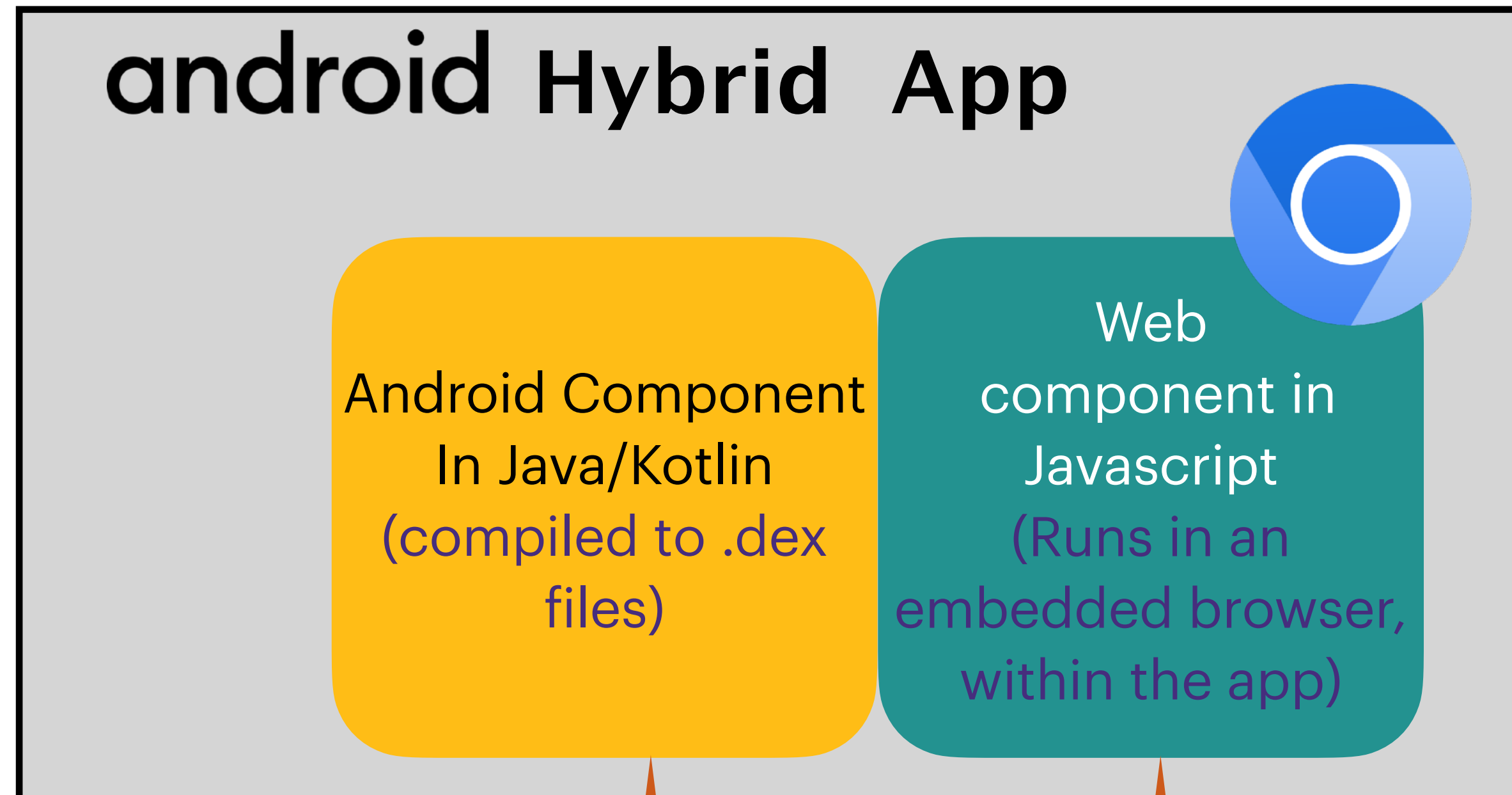
Christian Hammer  
University of  
Passau

RHPL@FSTTCS'24, IIT Gandhinagar

# Disclaimer

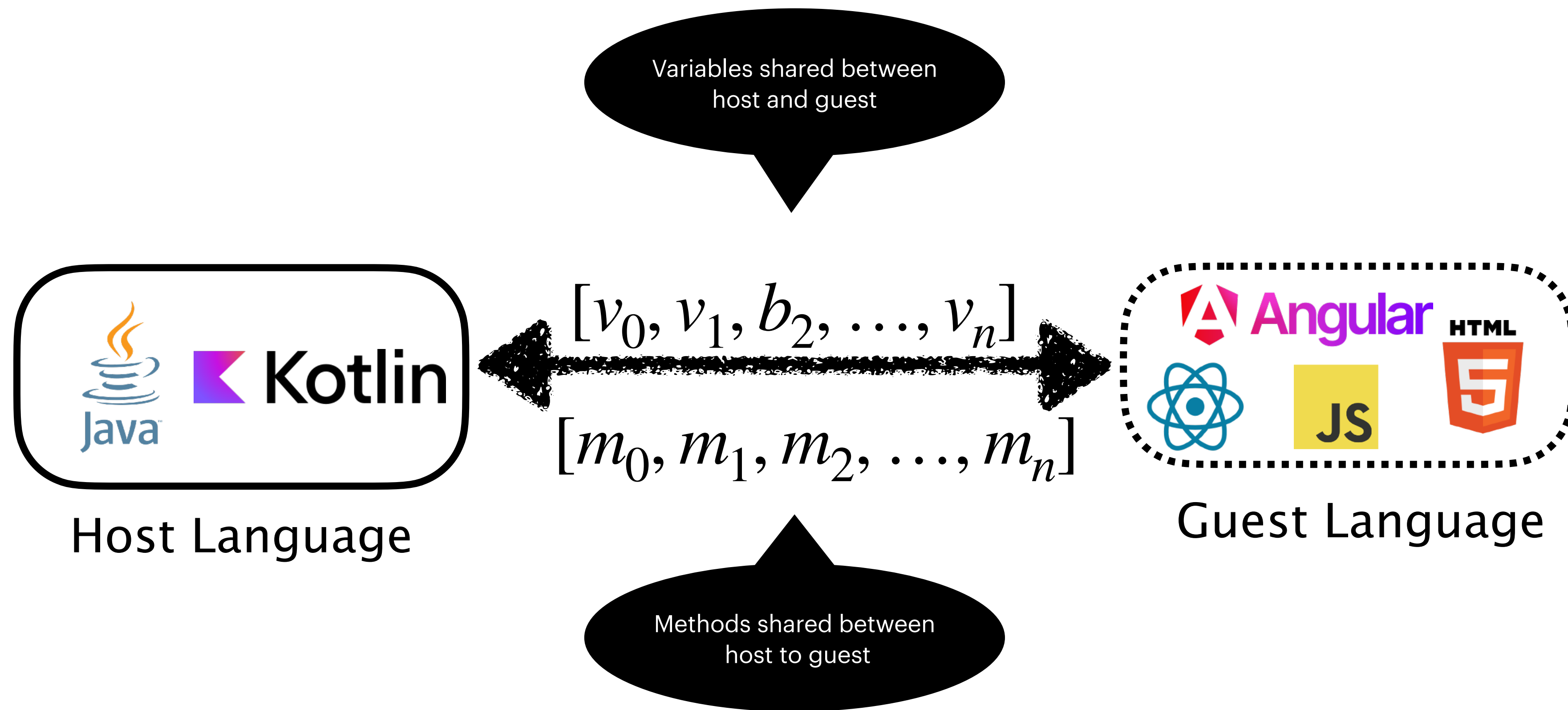
The work was done when I was affiliated with the University of Passau. The views and opinions expressed in this presentation are solely mine and do not necessarily represent the views, policies, or positions of my employer or any affiliated organisations.

# Android Hybrid Apps



Runs in two different threads

# WebView Programming Model



# Multilingual Programming in Hybrid Apps



android

```
1. foo(WebView myWebView) {
2.     JSObj js = new JSObj(); //obj@iface
3.     myWebView.addJavaScriptInterface(js,"jsobj") //webview
4.     myWebView.evaluateJavascript("set()");
5.     myWebView.loadUrl("javascript:alert('Hello World')");
6.     myWebView.loadUrl("https://www.google.com");
7. }
```

APIs

```
1. class JSObj {
    ...

10.     @JavaScriptInterface
11.     public void setValue(Object p) {
12.         this.f = p;
13.     }

200. }
```

Java



```
21. set() {
22.     x = new Object() // obj@x
23.     x.f = JSON.parse(api.getResult())
24.     v = x.f
25.     jsobj.setValue(v)
26. }
```

Javascript

# Multilingual Programming in Hybrid Apps



android

```
1. foo(WebView myWebView) {
2.   JSObj js = new JSObj(); //obj@iface
3.   myWebView.addJavaScriptInterface(js,"jsobj") //webview
4.   myWebView.evaluateJavascript("set()");
5.   myWebView.loadUrl("javascript:alert('Hello World')");
6.   myWebView.loadUrl("https://www.google.com");
7. }
```

```
1. class JSObj {
  ...
10.   @JavaScriptInterface
11.   public void setValue(Object p) {
12.     this.f = p;
13.   }
200. }
```

Java

Shared/Bridge methods



```
21. set() {
22.   x = new Object() // obj@x
23.   x.f = JSON.parse(api.getResult())
24.   v = x.f
25.   jsobj.setValue(v)
26. }
```

Javascript

# Multilingual Programming in Hybrid Apps



android

Bridge/Interface variable

```
1. foo(WebView myWebView) {
2.   JSObj js = new JSObj(); //obj@iface
3.   myWebView.addJavaScriptInterface(js, "jsobj") //webview
4.   myWebView.evaluateJavascript("set()");
5.   myWebView.loadUrl("javascript:alert('Hello World')");
6.   myWebView.loadUrl("https://www.google.com");
7. }
```

```
1. class JSObj {
   ...

10.   @JavaScriptInterface
11.   public void setValue(Object p) {
12.     this.f = p;
13.   }

200. }
```

Java

```
21. set() {
22.   x = new Object(); // obj@x
23.   x.f = JSON.parse(api.getResult());
24.   v = x.f;
25.   jsobj.setValue(v)
26. }
```

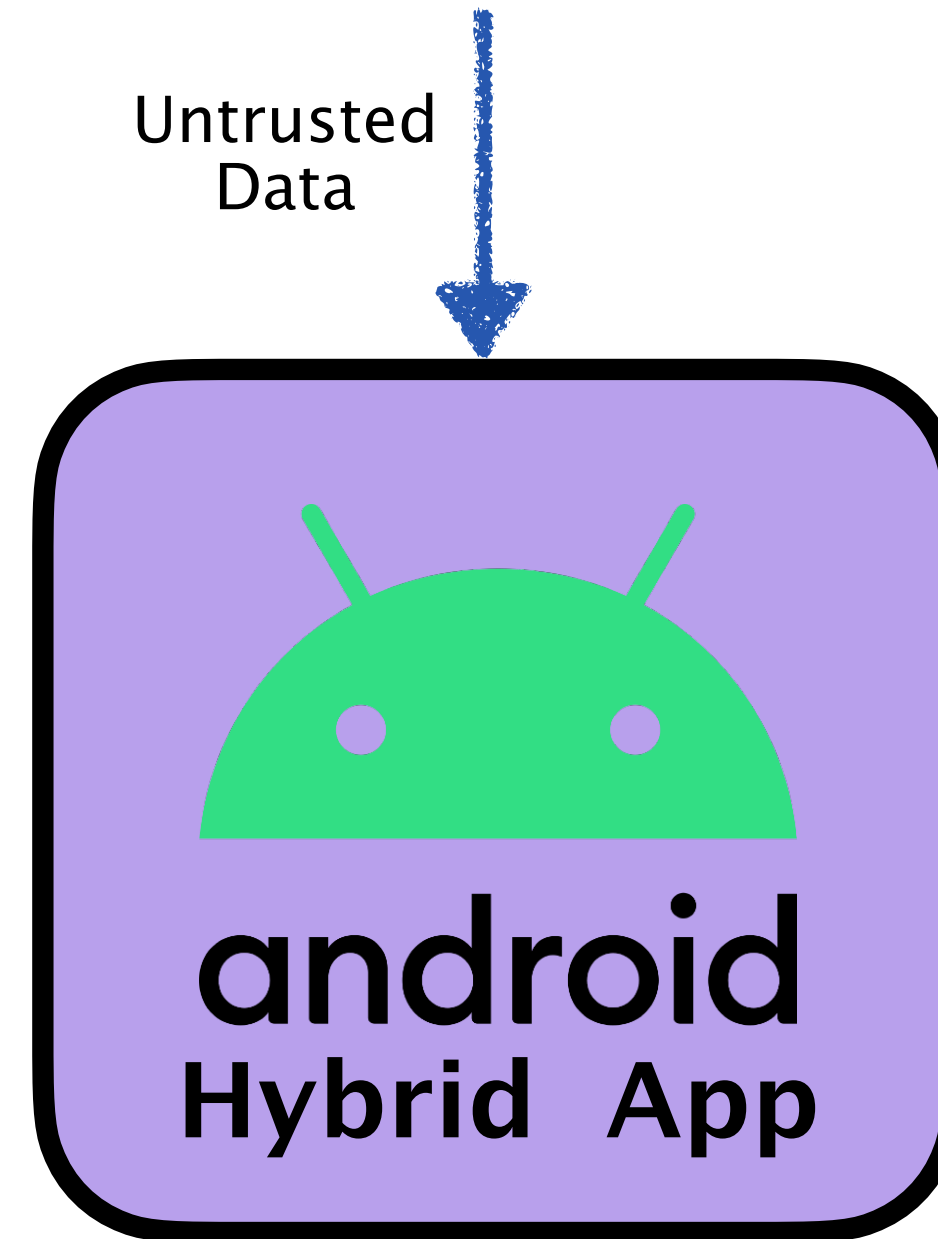
Javascript

# Information Flow Analysis

## Inter-language Threat Model For Bridge Objects

```
1 javascript :window.SynchJS.setValue((function(){  
2   try{  
3     return JSON.parse(Sponsorpay.MBE  
4     .SDKInterface.do_getOffer()).uses_tpn;  
5   }catch( js_eval_err ){  
6     return false;  
7   }}));
```

Untrusted  
Data



```
1 function set() {  
2   var x = interfaceObj.getValue();  
3   Sink(x); //New code to Sink secret x  
4 }
```

do\_getOffer().uses\_tpn



Integrity Violation

Confidential  
Data



sink(...)

Confidentiality Violation



# Peculiarities in WebView Bridge Communication

## Flow-Sensitive Update of Bridged Object

```
1. wv.addJavascriptInterface(ifcObj, "ifcObj");  
2. ifcObj.g = "publicData";  
3. wv.loadUrl("read()");  
4. ifcObj.g = "secret";
```

loadUrl is called  
before line 4

```
1.function read() {  
2.  var x = ifcObj.getG();  
3.  leak(x);  
4.}  
5.
```

Fetches the value  
"secret"

```
1. wv.addJavascriptInterface(ifcObj, "ifcObj");  
2. ifcObj.g = "publicData";  
3. wv.loadUrl("update()");  
4. ifcObj.g = "secret";
```

Fetches the value "1"

```
1.function update() {  
2.  ifcObj= {  
3.    getG: function () {  
4.      return "1";  
5.    }  
6.  };  
7.  var x = ifcObj.getG(); // x = "1"  
8.}
```

Overrides the  
interfaced method  
getG()

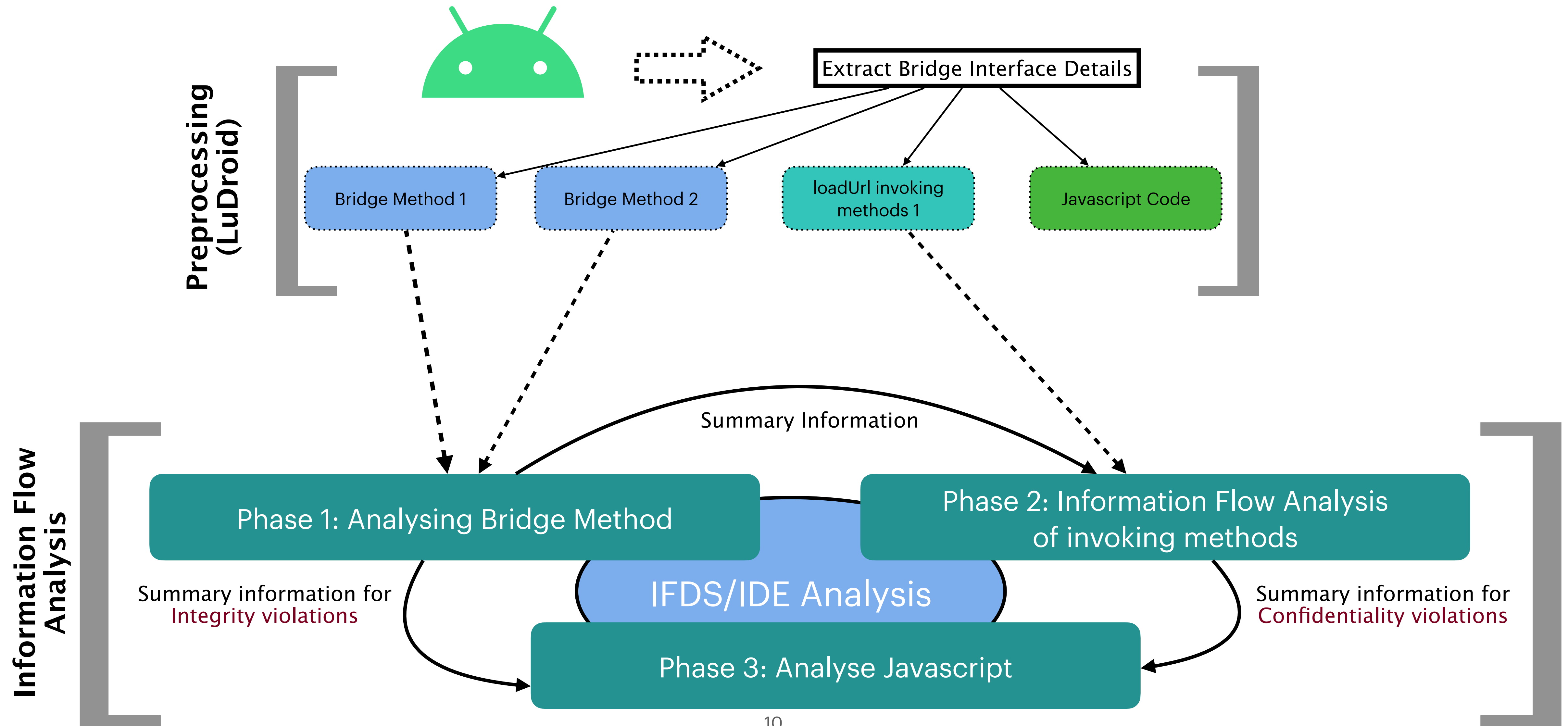
```
1. wv.addJavascriptInterface(ifcObj, "ifcObj");  
2. ifcObj.g = "publicData";  
3. wv.loadUrl("update()");  
4. ifcObj.g = "secret";
```

Deletes the bridge  
object

```
1.function delete() {  
2.  delete ifcObj;  
3.  var x = ifcObj.getG();  
4.}
```

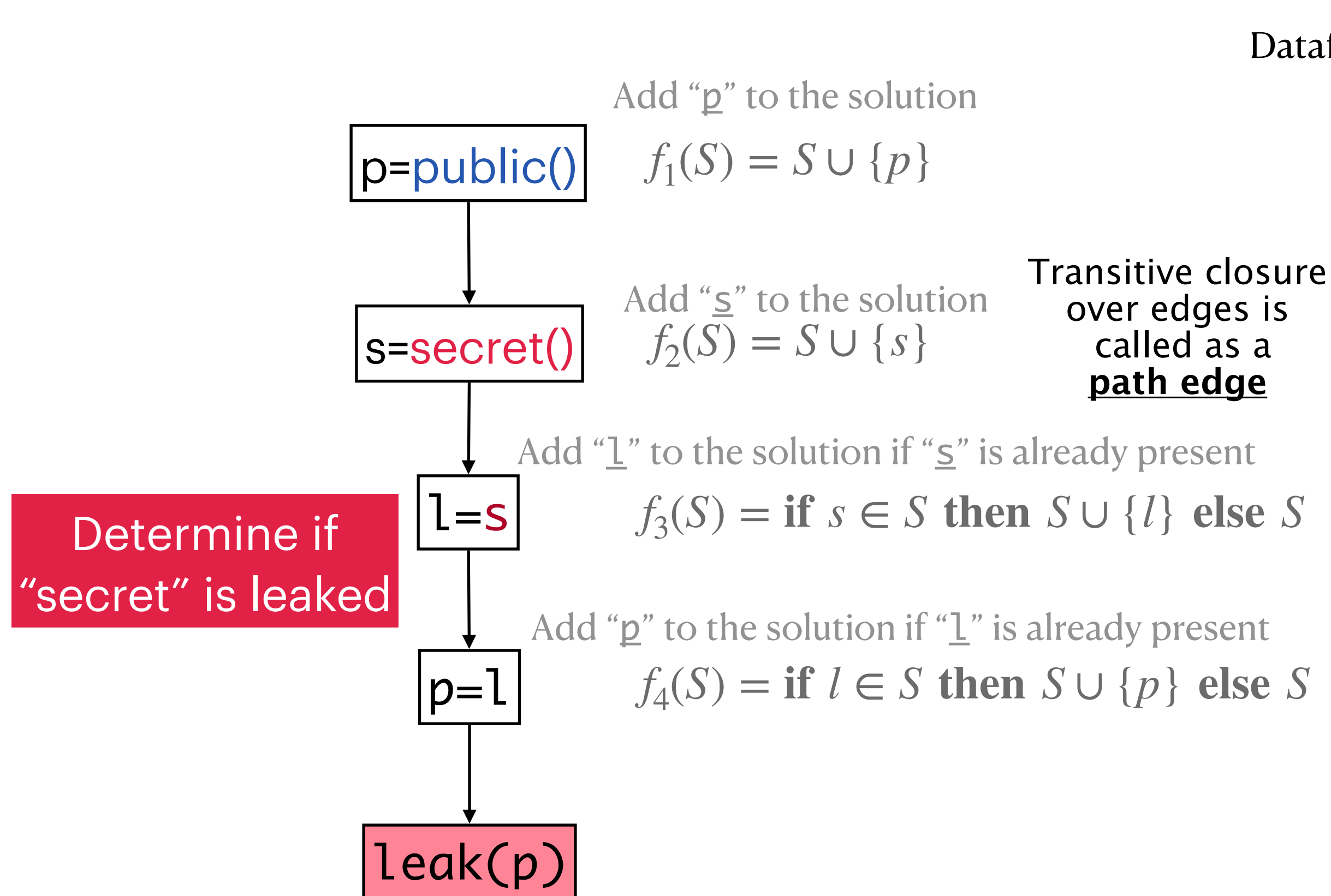
Ignores the delete  
operations

# IWanDroid: Information Flow Analysis on WebView

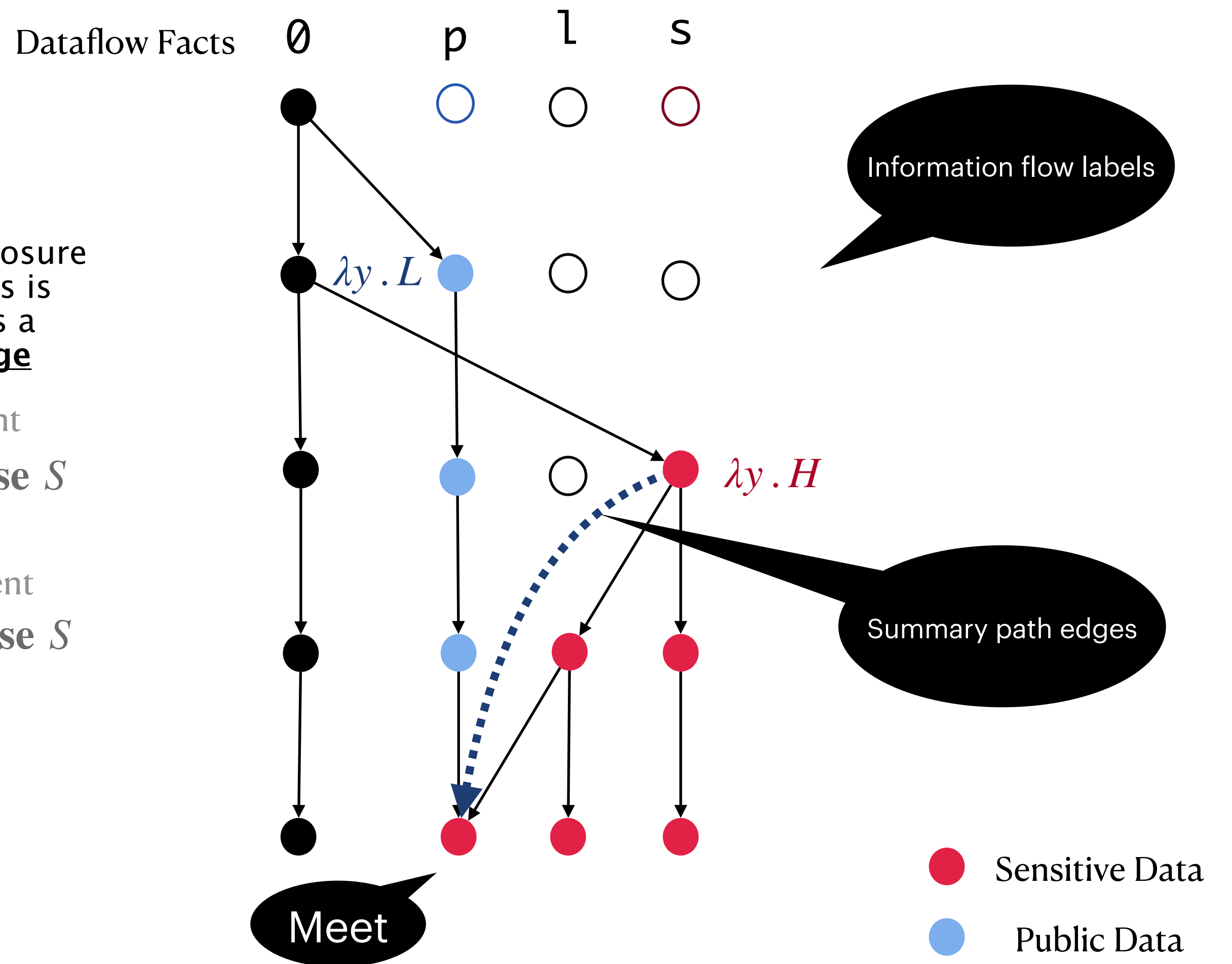


# IFDS/IDE Analysis

Computes certain dataflow analyses problem with graph reachability



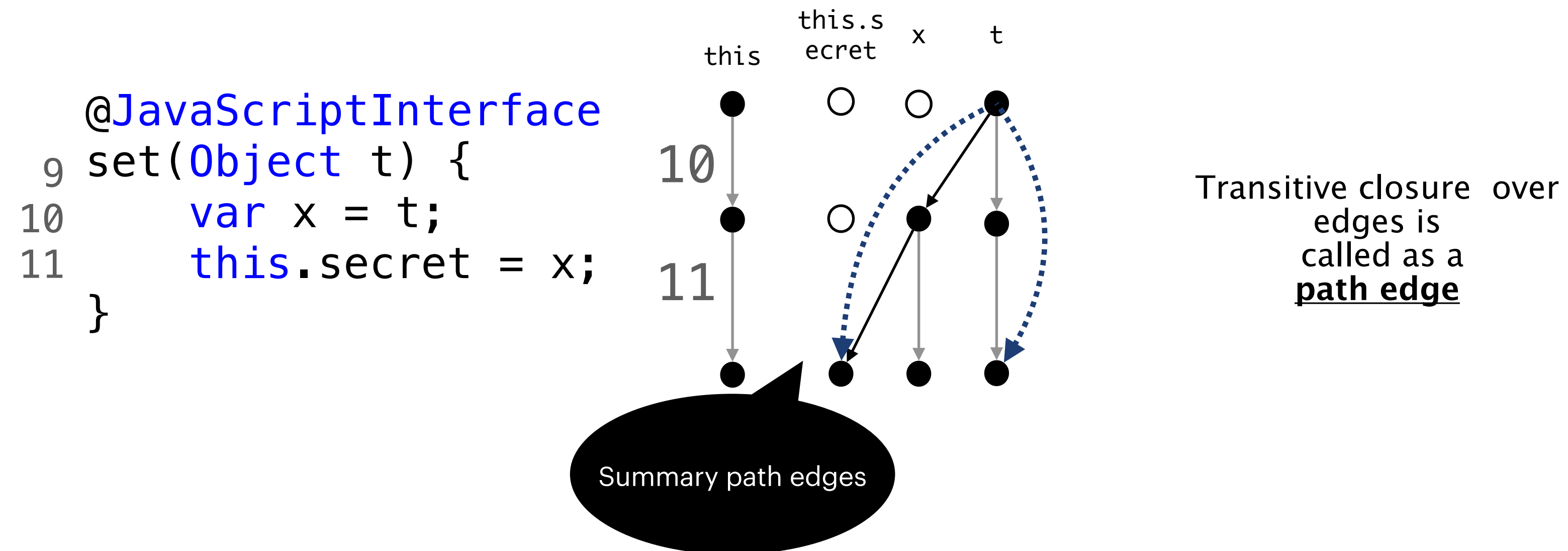
Transfer functions to compute reachability



Computes Information Flow Labels

# Analysis: Phase 1

## Identify variables which are likely to be influenced



Forward analysis to discover the set of access-paths modified by the input parameters to the function

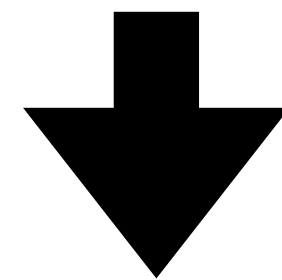
# Analysis: Phase 2

## Analyse Invoking Methods: Backward Taint Analysis

```

1. foo() {
2.   BridgeObj ifcObj = new BridgeObj(this)
3.   ifcObj.set("public");
4.   webView.evaluateJavascript("get()");
5.   var imei = getImei();
6.   ifcObj.set(imei);
7. }

```

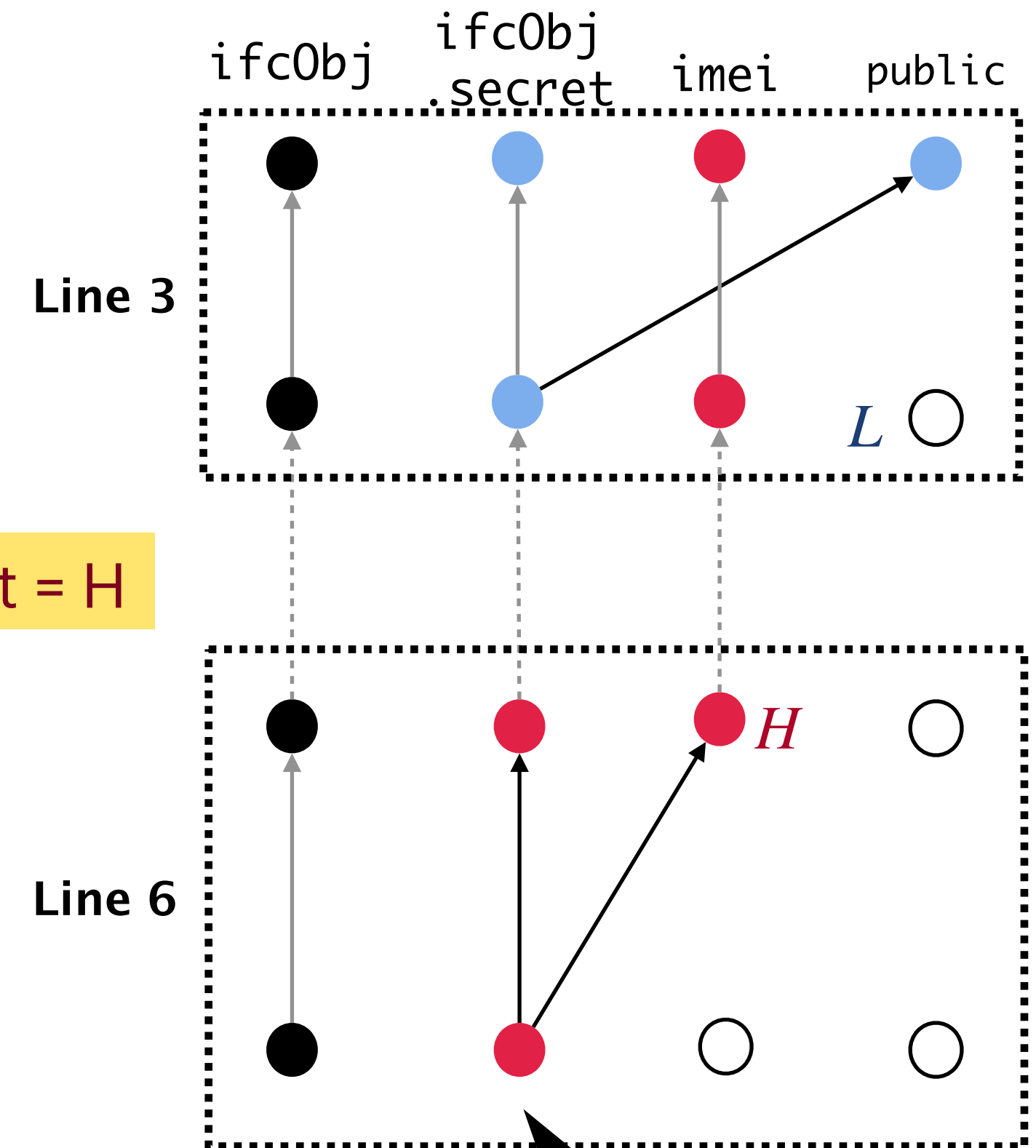


Access paths from Phase-1

```

1. foo() {
2.   BridgeObj ifcObj = new BridgeObj(this)
3.   ifcObj.secret = "public";
4.   webView.evaluateJavascript("get()");
5.   var imei = getImei();
6.   ifcObj.secret = imei;
7. }

```



Backward Taint Analysis using access graphs from Phase 1.

Access paths summaries from Phase 1

# Analysis: Phase 3

## Analyse Javascript Analysis : Forward Taint Analysis

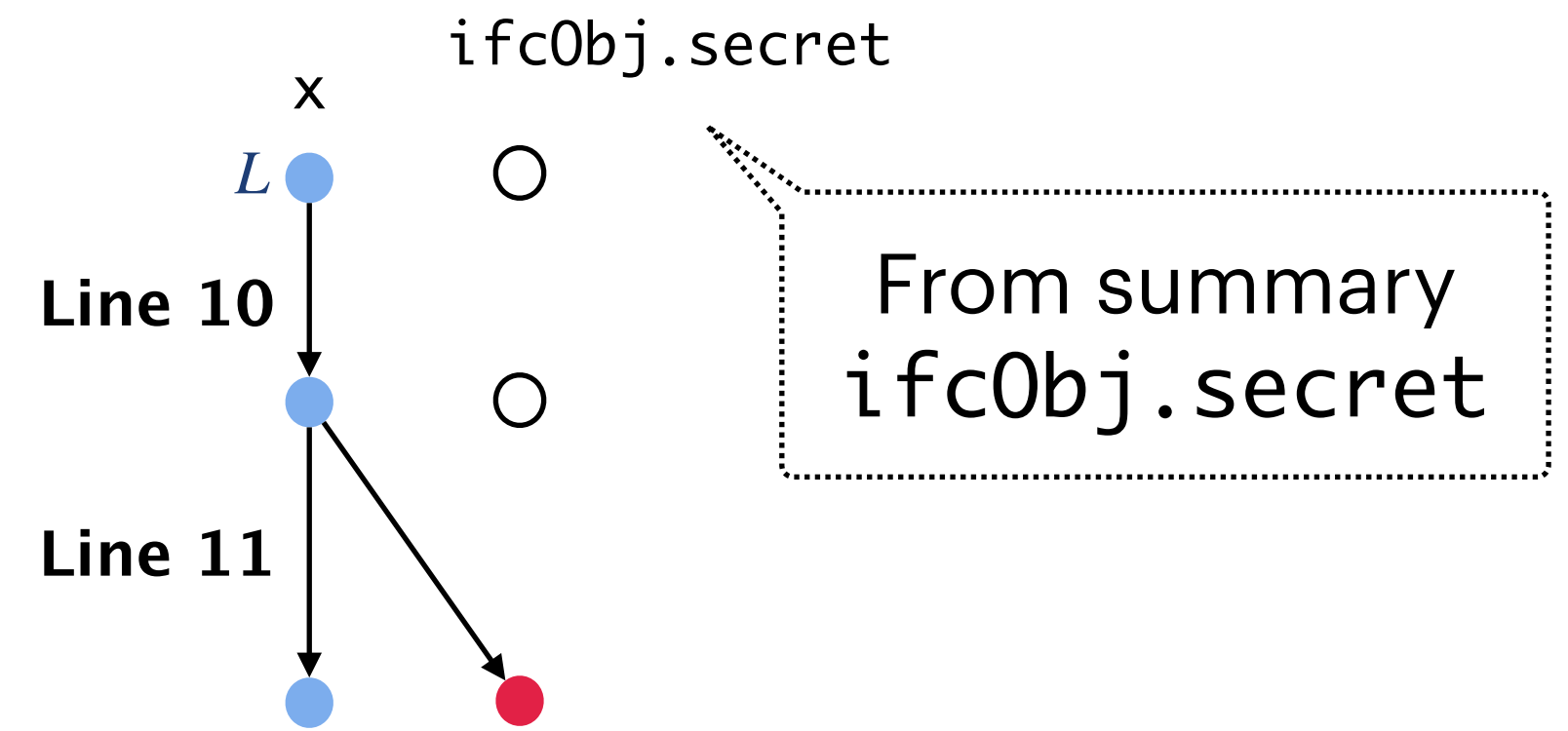
```

9 function function1() {
10     var x = api().getResult;
11     ifcObj.set(x); //integrity-violation
12 }

```

One of the parameters to the bridged interface is public?

ifcObj.secret = H



```

19 function function2() {
20     var x = ifcObj.get();
21     leak(x); //confidentiality-violation
22 }

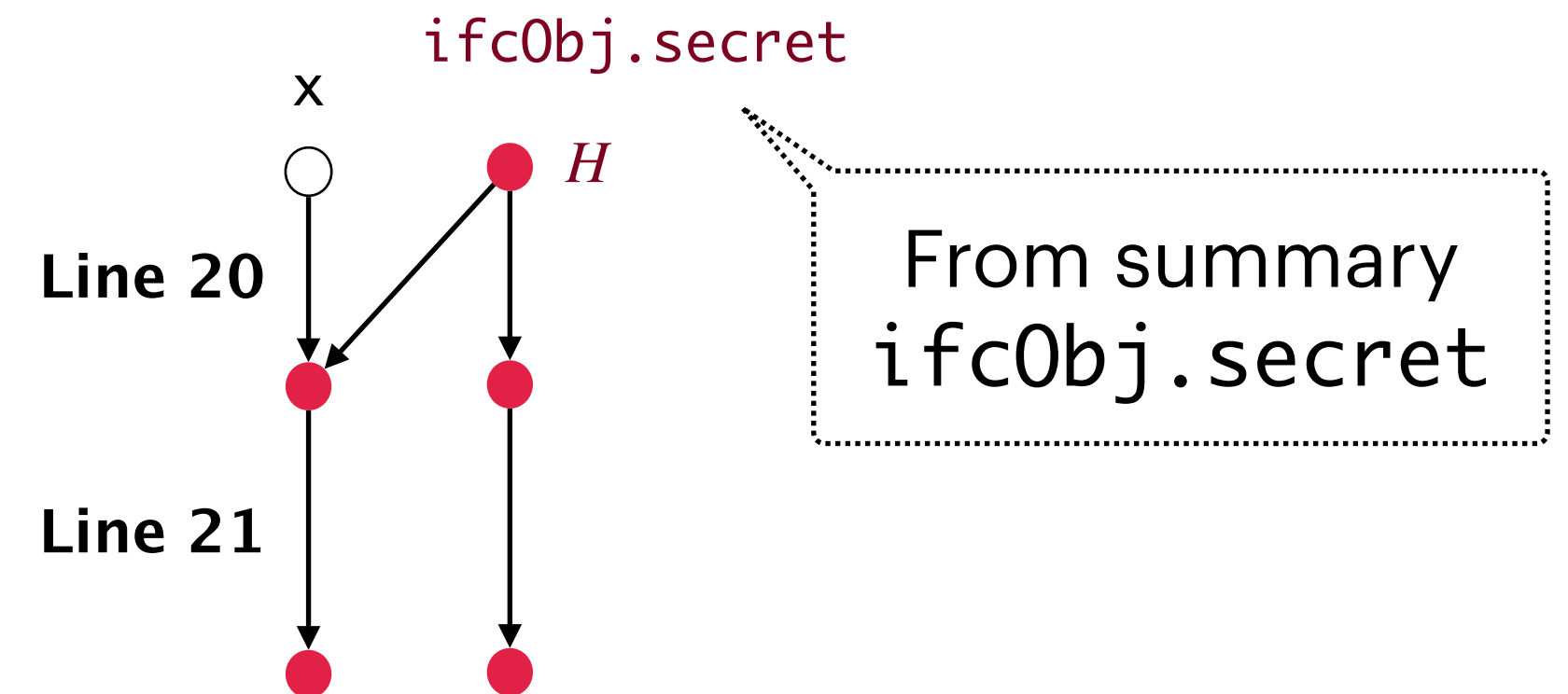
```

Replace the summary information use it in taint analysis

```

@JavaScriptInterface
get() {
    return this.secret;
}

```



# Analysis: Phase 3

## Analyse Javascript Analysis : Forward Taint Analysis

```

1. wv.addJavascriptInterface(ifcObj, "ifcObj");
2. ifcObj.g = "publicData";
3. wv.loadUrl("update()");
4. ifcObj.g = "secret";

```

```

1. function update() {
2.   ifcObj= {
3.     getG: function () {
4.       return "1";
5.     }
6.   };
7.   var x = ifcObj.getG(); // x = "1"
8. }

```

Overrides the interfaced method getG()

Fetches the value "1"

### Algorithm 4 $IDE_{js}$

Require:  $m_{js}$ : Bridge Javascript method

Require: *Ifc Value*: IfcValue for bridged interfaces  $PathWorkList \leftarrow \emptyset$

```

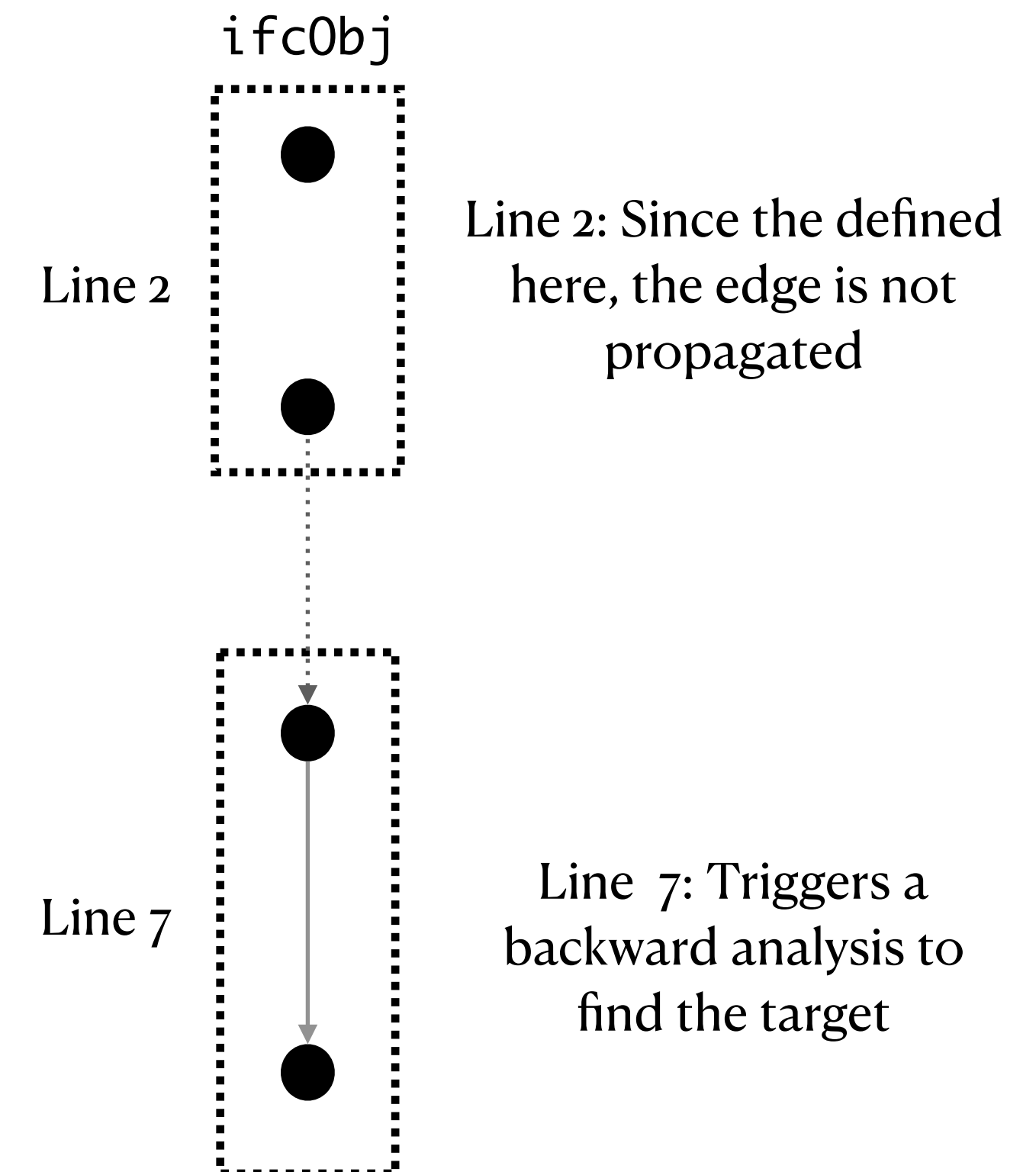
1: procedure ANALYZEJAVASCRIPT
2:   for every  $v$  in Variables( $m_{js}$ ) do
3:     INITIALIZE( $\langle m_{js}, v \rangle \rightarrow \langle m_{js}, v \rangle, id$ )
4:   end for PROPAGATE( $flowfunctions_{js}$ )
5: end procedure

```

```

6: procedure RESOLVETARGET( $\langle s, f \rangle, PathWorkList$ )  $targetfunctions \leftarrow \emptyset$ 
7:   for path  $\langle s_0, f_0 \rangle \rightarrow \langle s, f \rangle \in PathWorkList$  do
8:     if  $type(f_0)$  is a function then
9:        $targetFunctions \leftarrow f_0$ 
10:    end if
11:  end for return  $targetfunctions$ 
12: end procedure

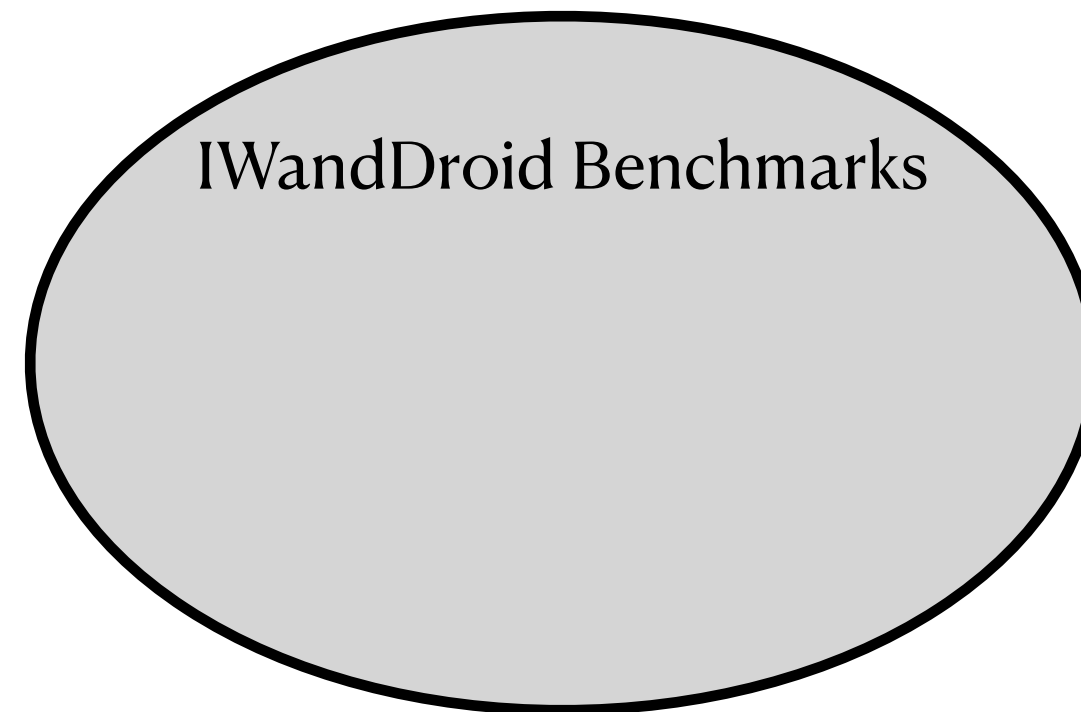
```



# Evaluation

## Precision

- How does **IwanDroid** compare to the **HybriDroid** and **LuDroid**?



19 Microbenchmarks

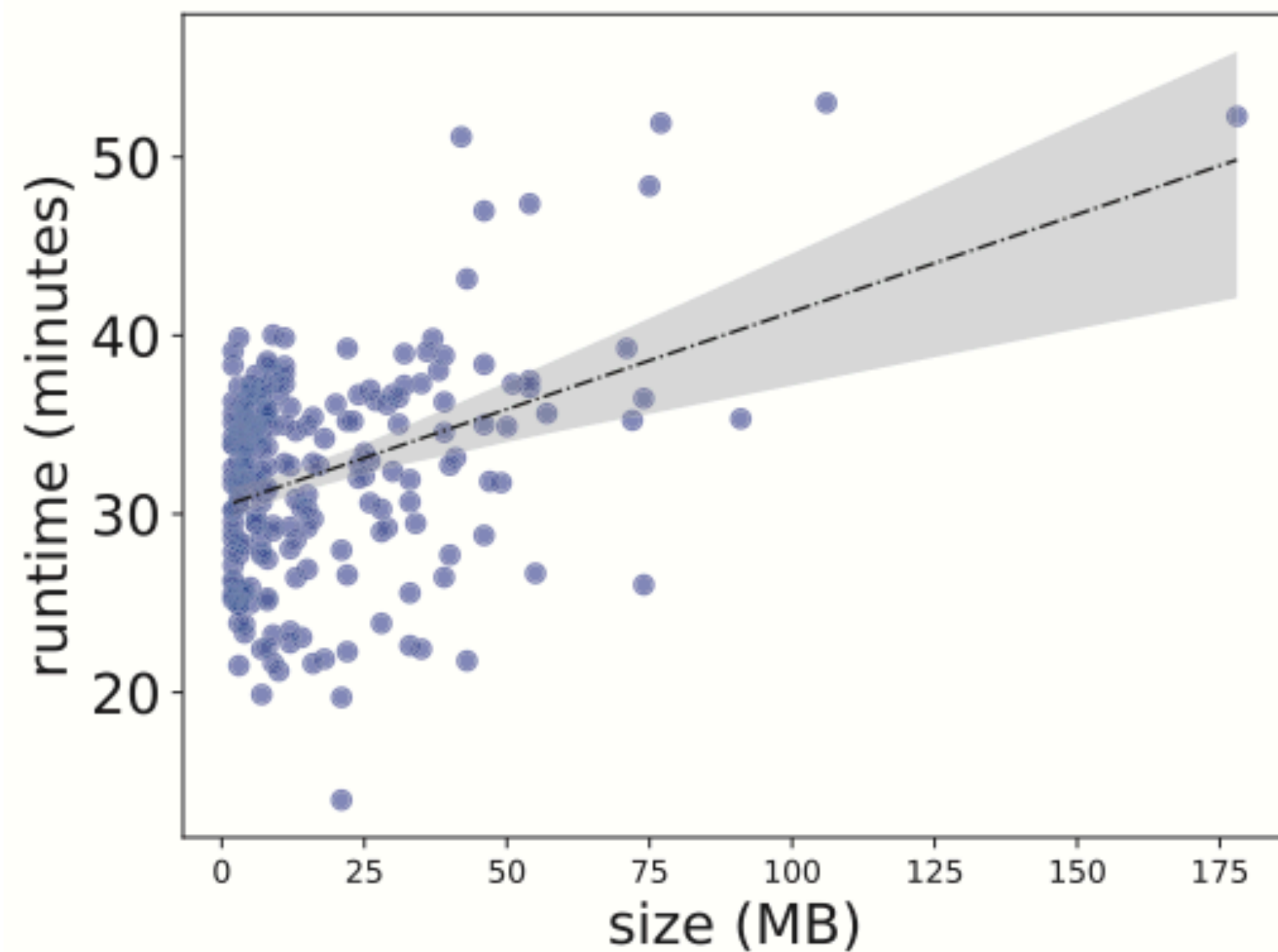
App ID	App Name	JS Enabled	HYBRIDROID		LUDROID	IWANDROID
			version 2016	current version		
1	HelloCordova	no	NA	NA	NA	NA
2	HelloHybrid	yes	success	failed	success	success
3	HelloScript	yes	success	failed	failed	success
4	HelloScript_simple	yes	success	failed	success	success
5	HelloScript_test	yes	success	failed	success	success
6	HybridAPIArgNum	yes	success	failed	success	success
7	NormalAliasFlowTest	no	NA	NA	NA	NA
8	NormalAliasFlowTest_objfield_false	no	NA	NA	NA	NA
9	NormalAliasFlowTest_objfield1	no	NA	NA	NA	NA
10	StrongUpdate	yes	failed	failed	success	success
11	StrongUpdateCaseA	yes	failed	failed	success	success
12	StrongUpdateCaseB	yes	failed	failed	failed	success
13	StrongUpdateCaseC	yes	failed	failed	failed	success
14	JSUpdateCaseD	yes	failed	failed	failed	success
15	JSUpdateCaseE	yes	failed	failed	failed	success
16	JSUpdateCaseF	yes	failed	failed	failed	success
17	JSUpdateCaseG	yes	failed	failed	failed	success
18	DynamicJSCaseH	yes	failed	failed	failed	failed
19	DynamicAliasCaseI	yes	failed	failed	failed	failed



# Evaluation

## Scalability

- How scalable is IwanDroid on large application?



**687 apps from F-Droid Store**

**Criteria:**

1. Relatively large apps
2. App should have `addJavaScript` enabled

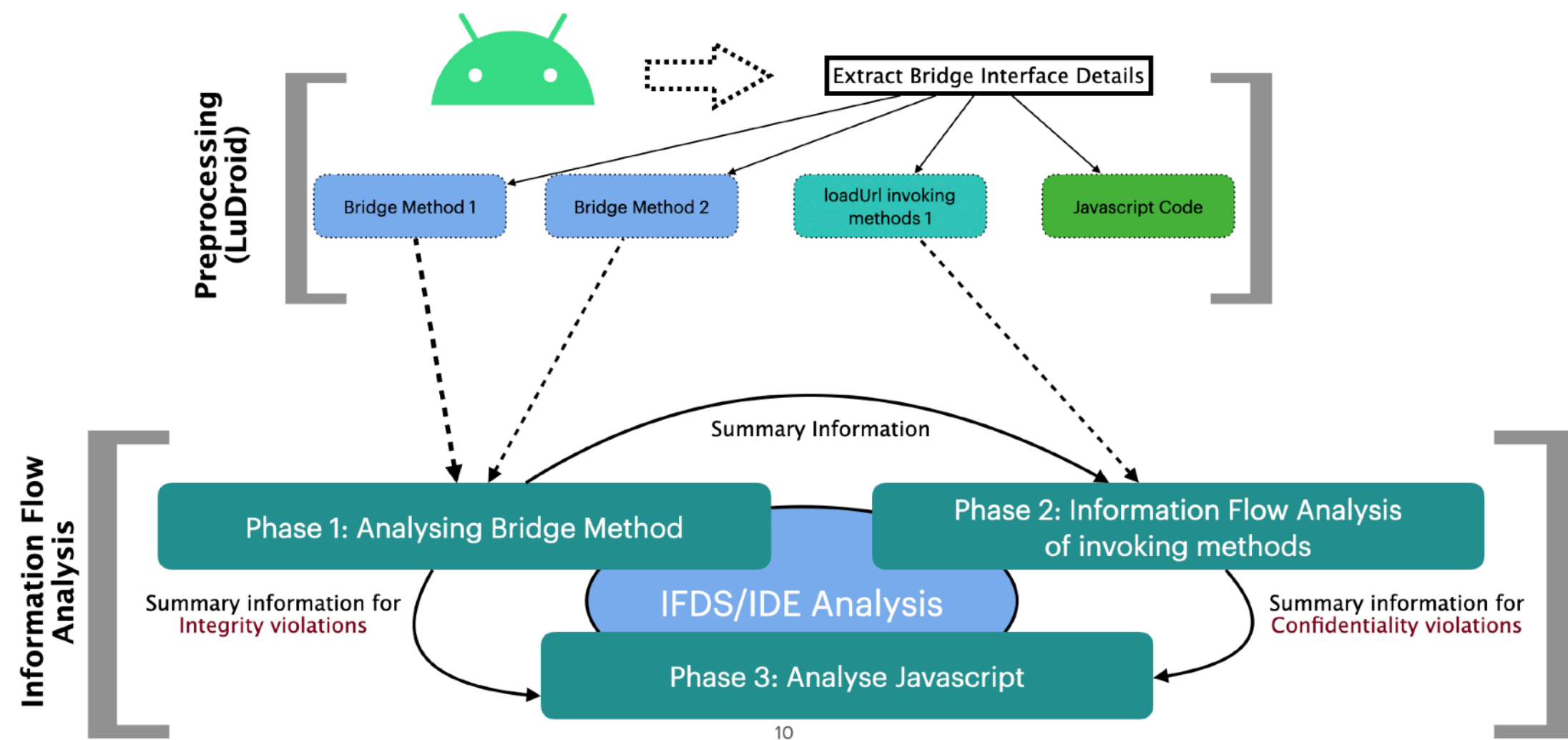
*IwanDroid* identified 136 confidentiality and 142 integrity violations.

# Reflections

## IWandDroid

- Defined a confidentiality and integrity threat model for Hybrid apps
- **IWandDroid** to detect the confidentiality and integrity violations without analysing the whole program

# IWanDroid: Information Flow Analysis on WebView



**IWanDroid**

*IWanDroid* is an information flow analysis for Android WebViews apps. This tool was developed as a research project by Abhishek Tiwari and Jyoti Prakash at the Chair of Software Engineering 1 of University of Passau.

### Salient Features of Tool

#### Tool

*IWanDroid* in the executable form is available at: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8279731>.

#### Machine Requirement

- 64 GB Ram with eight-core processor (for large-scale apps)

#### Content of the artifact:

<https://iwandroid.github.io/>

- of the paper. The large-scale\_apps folder contains all the large scale apps from Fdroid. The selection criteria is mentioned in the Dataset selection (Section V).
- Preprocessing folder contains the tool related to the Preprocessing step of our framework (Section IV-A).
- The sdk folder contains the Android.jar file.
- The iwanDroid-1.0-jar-with-dependencies.jar file contains the implementation for Section IV-B.
- Source Code Folder contains the source code of IWanDroid. The latest source code can be found at: <https://github.com/mig40000/Demand-driven-IFC-for-Hybrid-apps>
- Other folders and scripts are used for setting up the docker and tool.

Jyoti Prakash\*  
OpenText India

Abhishek Tiwari\*  
University of  
Southern Denmark

Christian Hammer  
University of  
Passau