

How I Met Your Implemented Variability: Identification in Object-Oriented Systems with symfinder

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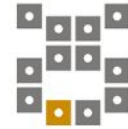
Tutorial at SPLC '21

September 6, 2021

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BOSCH



pure-systems



ELSEVIER



MetaCase

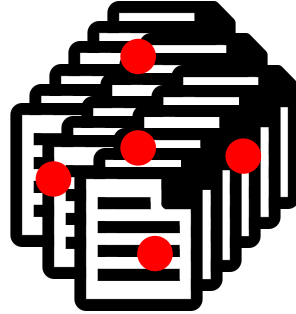


Association for
Computing Machinery



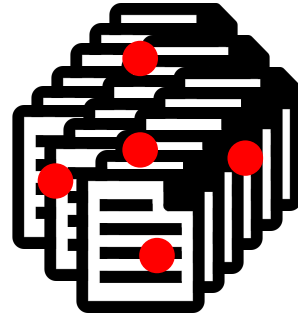
SIGSOFT
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What this is all about



Variability-rich system
in a single code base

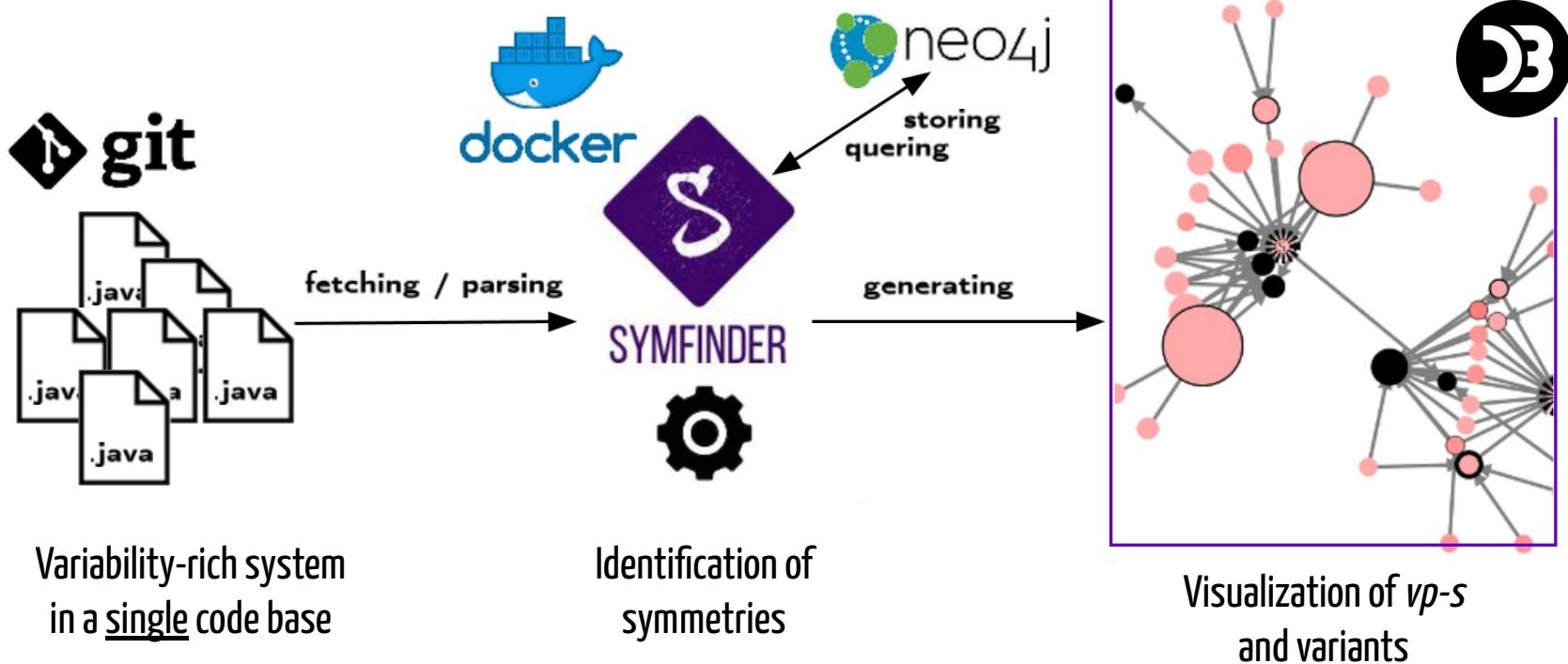
What this is all about



Variability-rich system
in a single code base

How to identify these variability implementations?

What this is all about



1) Motivation and introduction to symfinder

(12.00 – 12.40)

2) symfinder: first contact

(12.40 – 13.30)

3) Break

(13.30 – 14.00)

4) Guided use of symfinder

(14.00 – 15.00)

5) Wrapping up and exchange time

(15.00 – 15.30)

Table of contents

Motivation and introduction to symfinder

Introduction

Many known software systems are highly-variable



16.000 options managed
in 25M LoC [Acher2018]

#ifdef



ANDROID

24.000 different platforms in
2015 [Open2015]

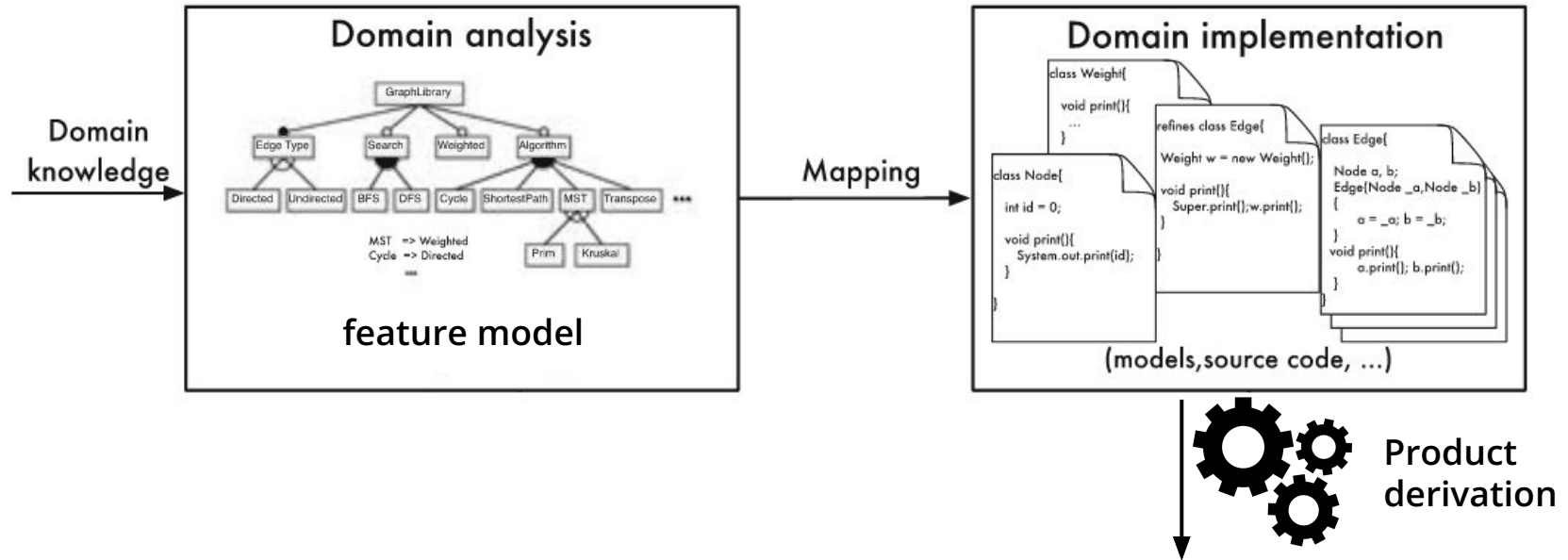
Object-orientation



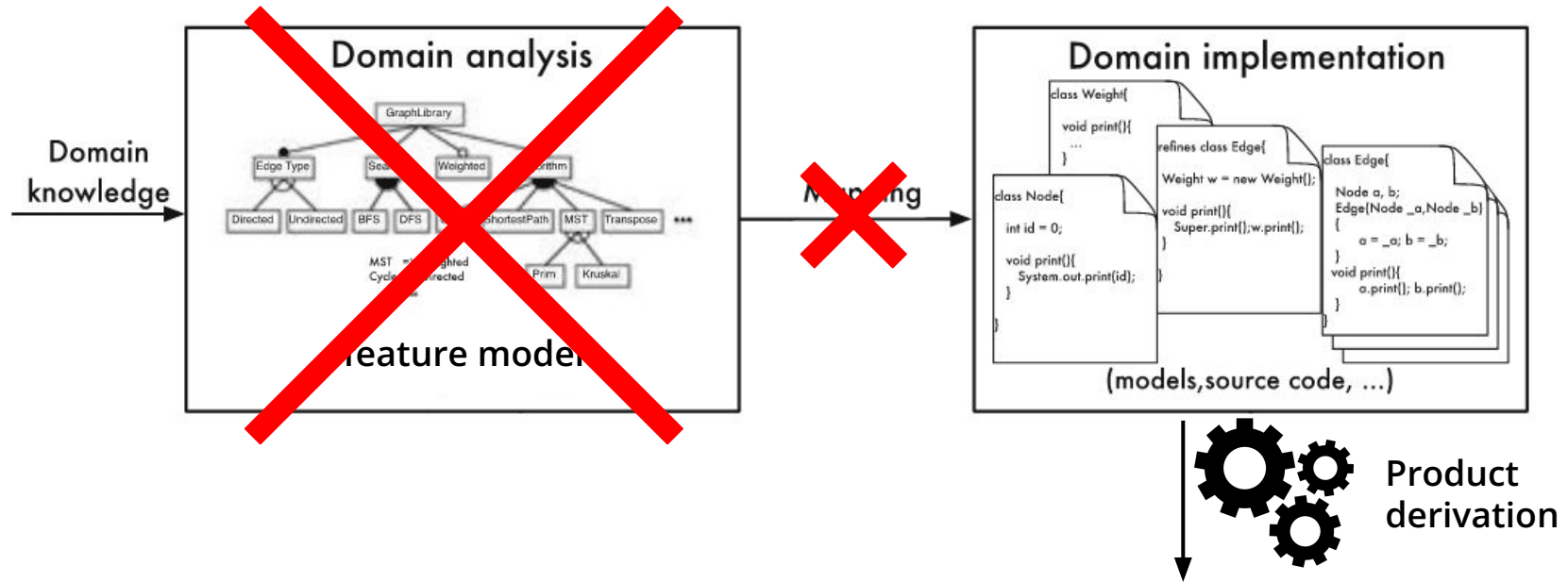
2.000+ options generating variants for
platforms, security levels... [Acher2018]

Object-orientation

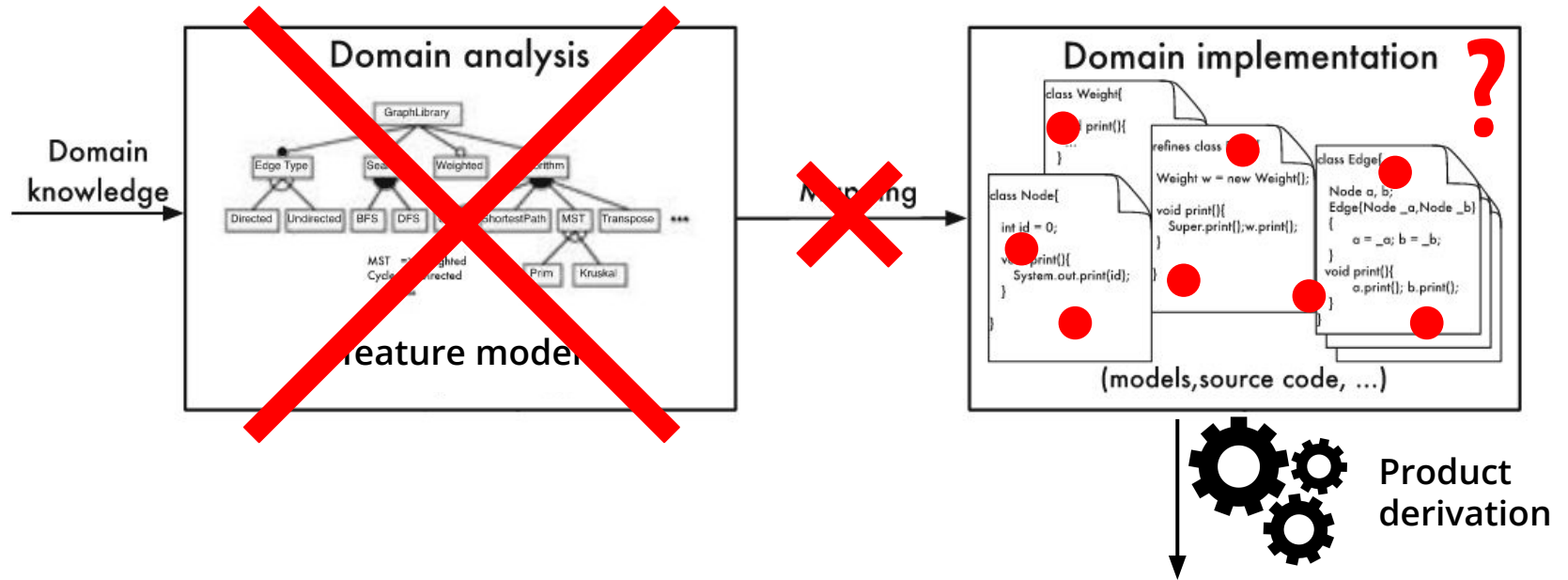
Software Product Lines: the *classic* (but heavy) variability management chain



The reality of variability management

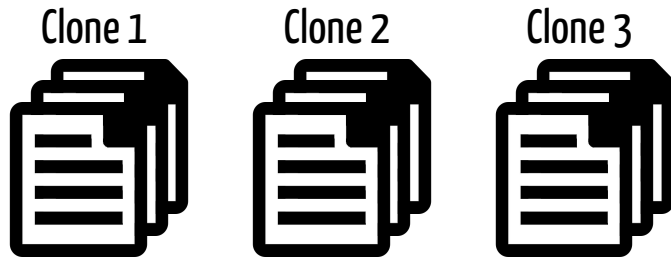


Problem: How to identify variability implementations in an existing OO codebase?



Feature location and feature identification: challenges and impact

Context: [projects clones](#)

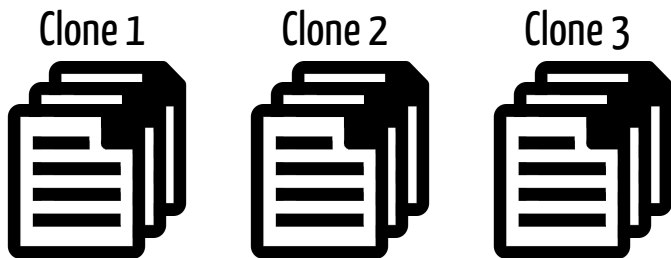


Detection method:

Comparison between clones and mapping with the domain features [Assunção2017]

Feature location and feature identification: challenges and impact

Context: [projects clones](#)

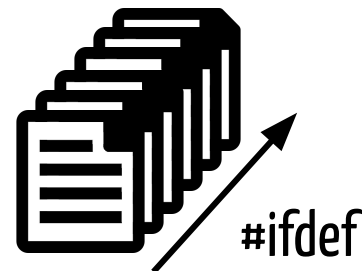


Detection method:

Comparison between clones and mapping with the domain features [Assunção2017]

Context: unique codebase and [preprocessing directives](#)

`#ifdef` → variant



Detection method:

Determining the consistency of directives [Liebig2010]

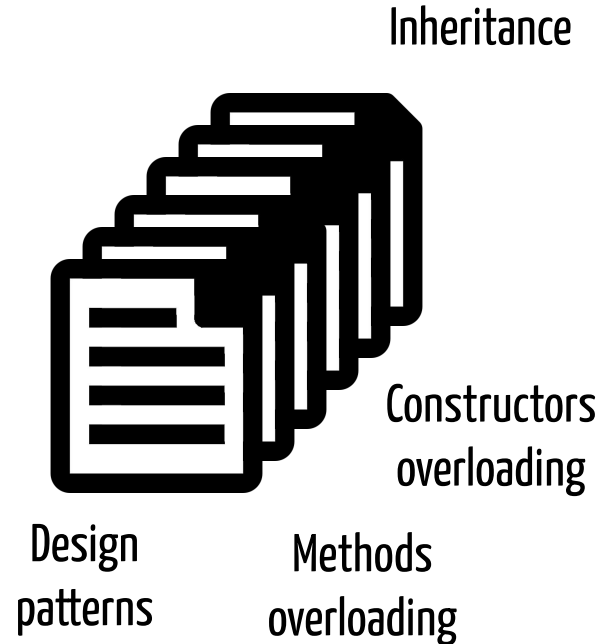
Feature location and feature identification: challenges and impact

Our context: large and unique object-oriented codebase

- Several implementation mechanisms
- Variability buried in the code (variation points)

Detection method:

- Techniques coupling static and dynamic analysis
[Michelon2021]
- **No technique using only static analysis**
[Metzger2014, Těrnava2017]



Features, variation points and variants

```
1 | public abstract class Shape {  
2 |     public abstract double area();  
3 |     public abstract double perimeter(); /*...*/  
4 | }
```

```
5 | public class Circle extends Shape {  
6 |     private final double radius;  
7 |     // Constructor omitted  
8 |     public double area() {  
9 |         return Math.PI * Math.pow(radius, 2);  
10 |    }  
11 |    public double perimeter() {  
12 |        return 2 * Math.PI * radius;  
13 |    }  
14 | }
```

```
15 | public class Rectangle extends Shape {  
16 |     private final double width, length;  
17 |     // Constructor omitted  
18 |     public double area() {  
19 |         return width * length;  
20 |     }  
21 |     public double perimeter() {  
22 |         return 2 * (width + length);  
23 |     }  
24 |     public void draw(int x, int y) {  
25 |         // rectangle at (x, y, width, length)  
26 |     }  
27 |     public void draw(Point p) {  
28 |         // rectangle at (p.x, p.y, width, length)  
29 |     }  
30 | }
```

Features, variation points and variants

```
1 | public abstract class Shape {
2 |     public abstract double area();
3 |     public abstract double perimeter(); /*...*/
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```

vp_shape

```
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10 |    }
11 |    public double perimeter() {
12 |        return 2 * Math.PI * radius;
13 |    }
14 | }

```

v_circle

Inheritance

v_rectangle

```
15 | public class Rectangle extends Shape {
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17 |     // Constructor omitted
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Features, variation points and variants

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v_circle

Inheritance

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28 |         // rectangle at (p.x, p.y, width, length)
29 |     }
30 | }
```

v_rectangle

vp_draw

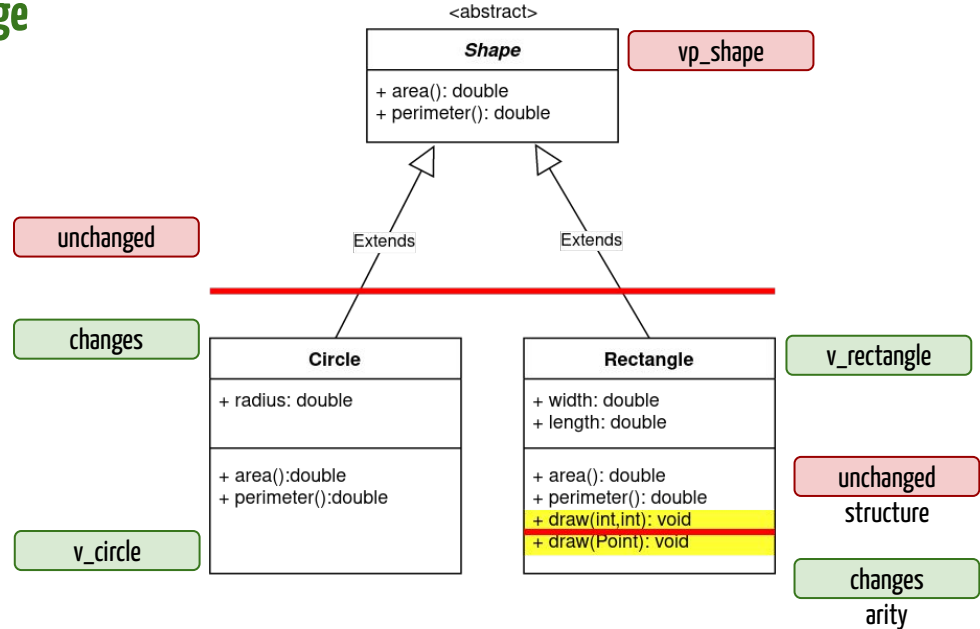
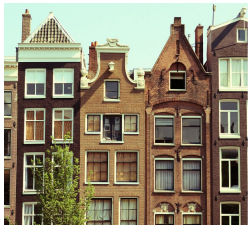
Overloading

Symmetries in nature, human-made artifacts, and OO constructs

Symmetry represents **immunity** to a possible **change**

and is present in object-oriented constructs

including the ones implementing variability!



Types of symmetries in OO constructs

	Class as type (Not identified by symfinder)	Class subtyping	Method / constructor overriding	Method / constructor overloading	Strategy	Factory	Decorator	Template
Commonality (unchange) ⇒ vp	Type	Superclass / Interface	Signature	Name	Superclass	Abstract creator and product	Components and decorator interfaces	Method defining the template
Variability (change) ⇒ variant	Objects	Subclasses / implementing classes	Implementations in subclasses	Signature	Algorithms	Concrete creators and products	Concrete components and decorators	Steps used in the template

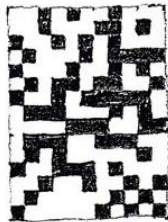
The theory of centres [Alexander2002]

Centre: a field of organized force in an object or part of an object which makes that object or part exhibit centrality.

A **centre** is commonly formed by one or multiple **local symmetry(ies)**.

⇒ The centre is the common part of the symmetric variants.

Random
→ hard to describe



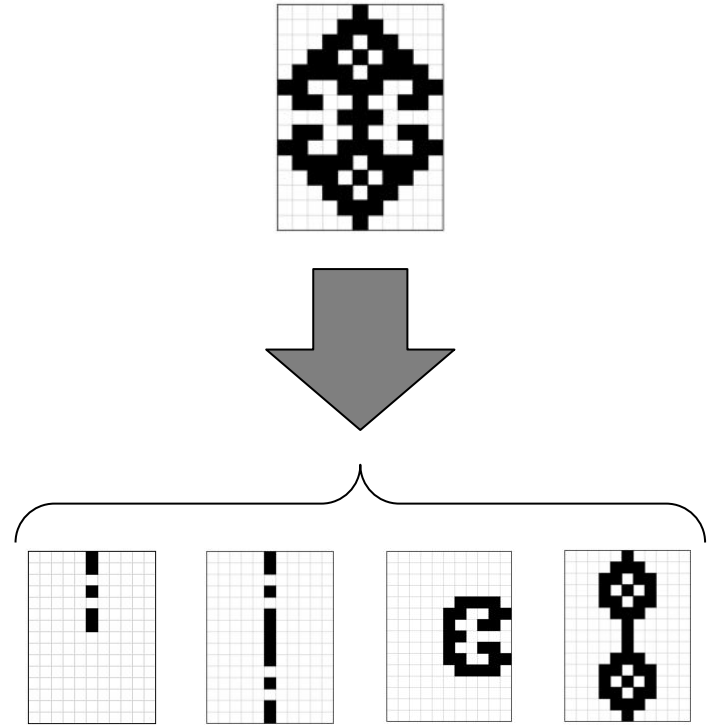
Ordered around a
centre of symmetry
→ easy to describe

Centres and density

Local symmetries form a **structure**,
whose **coherence** is determined with
its **number of symmetries**

[Alexander1968]

⇒ remarkable structures aggregate a
density of local symmetries



Identifying variability implementations

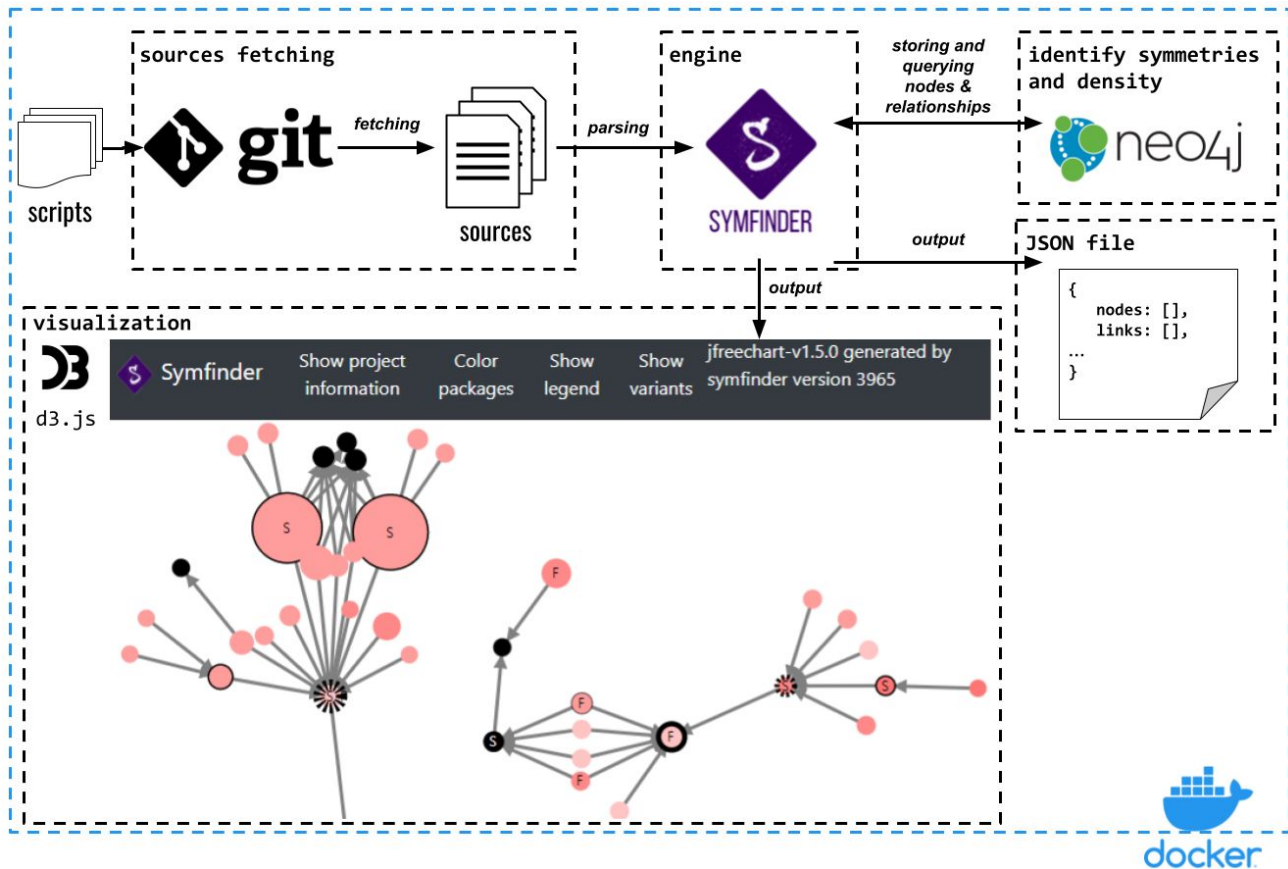
Variability implementation technique	↔	local symmetry
- variation point (commonality)	↔	unchanged
- variant (variability)	↔	changes

Identification through local symmetries in core assets

High density of symmetries → variability intense places

symfinder

- Class
- Interface
- Abstract class
- Number of variants
- Method overloads
- Constructor overloads
- S Strategy pattern
- F Factory pattern
- Inheritance

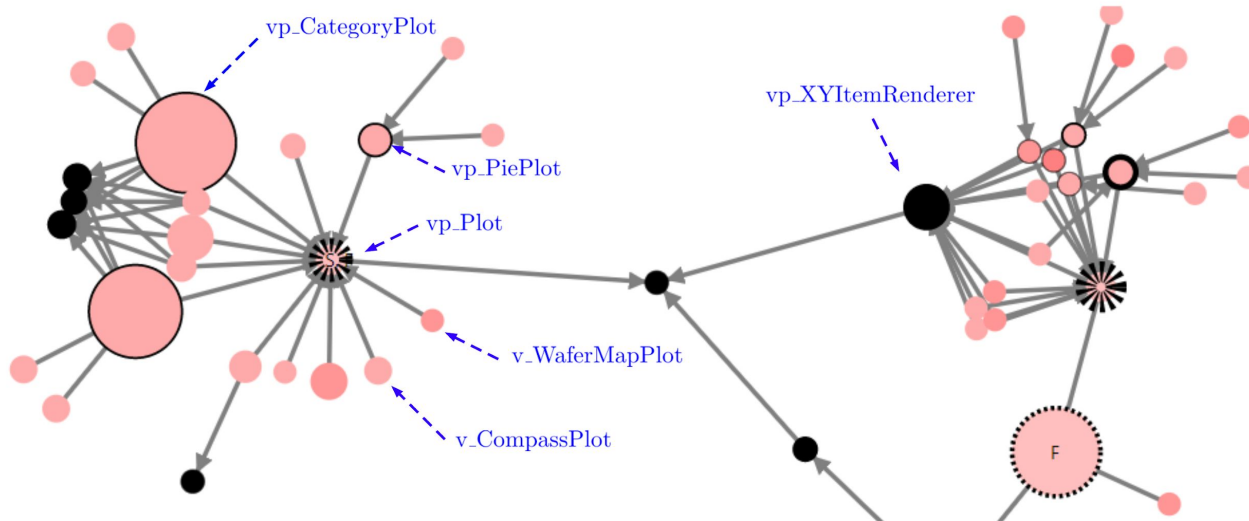
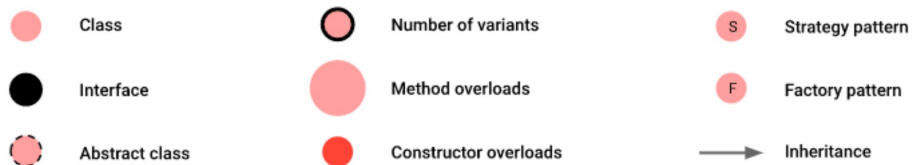


Johann Mortara, Xhevahire Tërnava, and Philippe Collet. "symfinder: A Toolchain for the Identification and Visualization of Object-Oriented Variability Implementations". In: the 23rd International Systems and Software Product Line Conference. Vol. B. Paris, France: ACM Press, Sept. 2019, pp. 5–8.

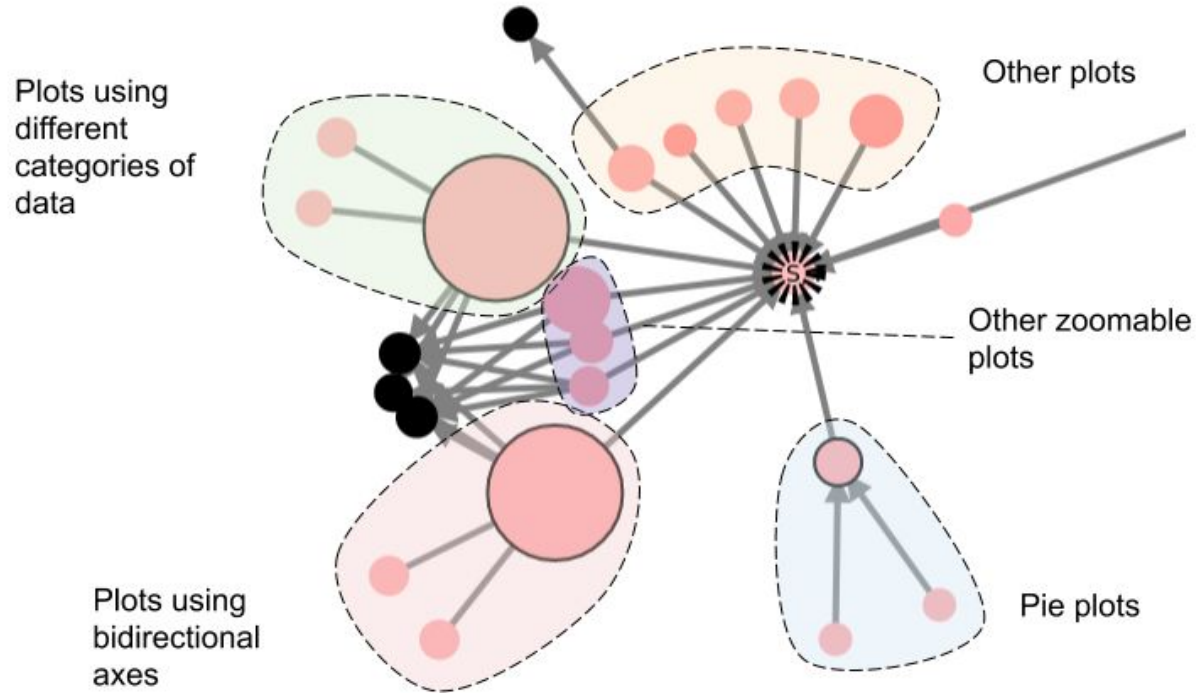
Johann Mortara, Philippe Collet, and Xhevahire Tërnava. "Identifying and Mapping Implemented Variabilities in Java and C++ Systems using symfinder". In: 24th ACM International Systems and Software Product Line Conference (SPLC '20). Ed. by ACM et al. Virtual Conference. MONTREAL, QC, Canada, Oct. 2020.

Visualization principles

 Symfinder Show project information Hide legend jfreechart-v1.5.0 generated by symfinder version 549c



Example of identified variability implementations



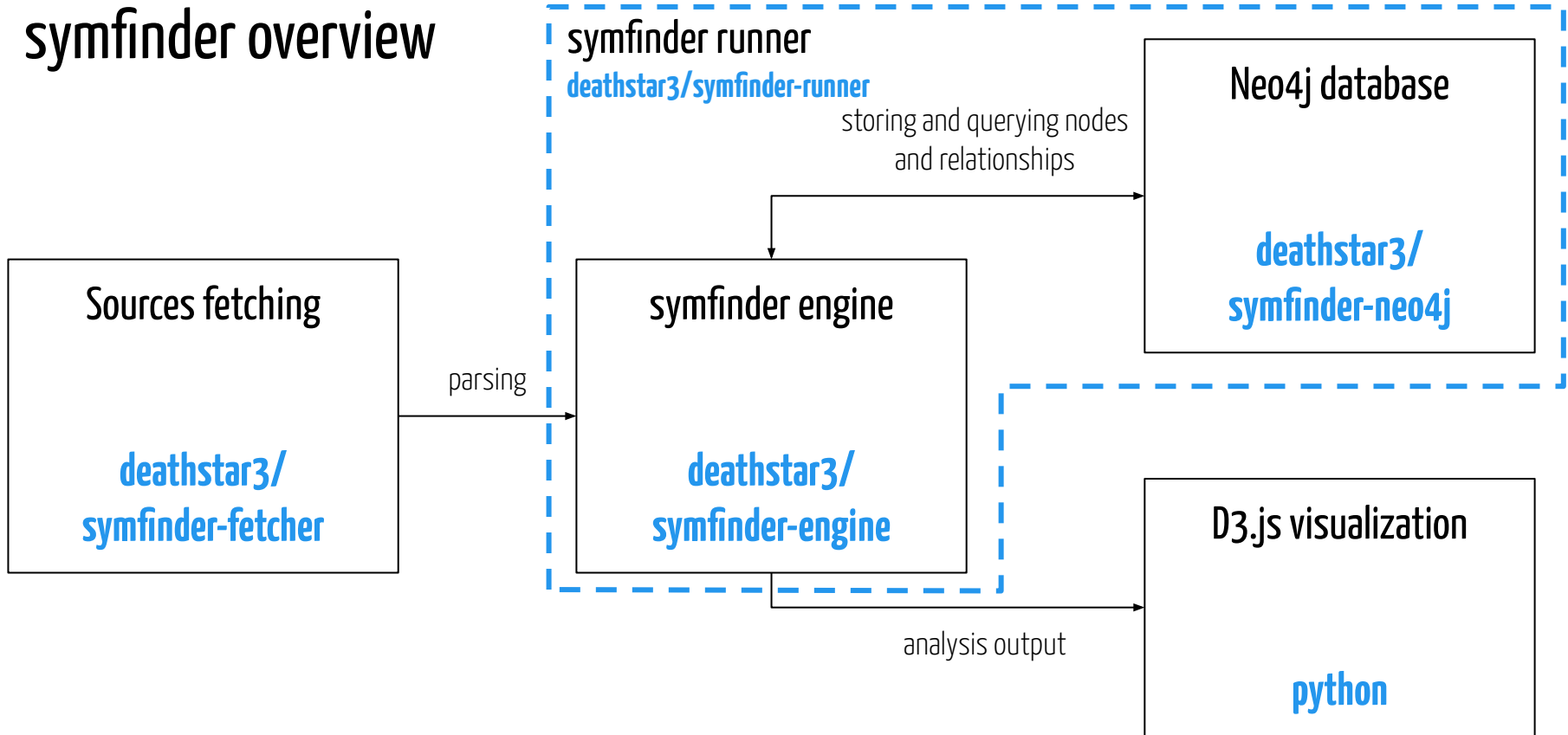
symfinder: first contact

Prerequisites

- Git to clone symfinder's repository, or ZIP download is also possible
- A functional Docker and Docker Compose install
 - Instructions → <https://docs.docker.com/engine/install/>
- A web browser to display the visualizations

This list is also present in the REQUIREMENTS.md file at the repository's root.

symfinder overview



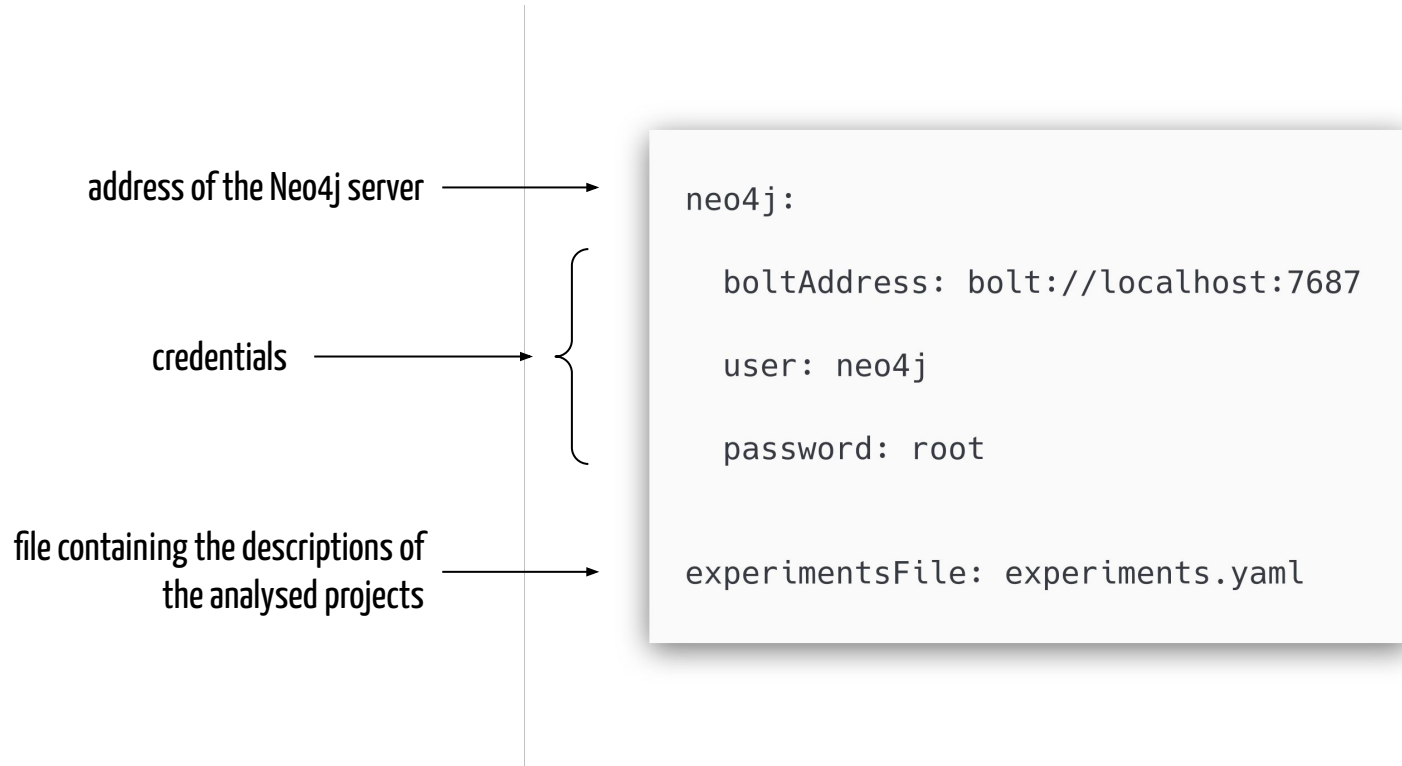
Used Docker images

Declaring studied projects: the experiments.yaml file

analysis name	→	jfreechart:
project url	→	repositoryUrl: https://github.com/jfree/jfreechart
directory to analyse	→	sourcePackage: .
tag / commit to checkout	→	tagIds: - v1.5.0
packages / classes not to analyse	→	filters: - org.jfree.chart.util.PublicCloneable - org.jfree.chart.event - org.jfree.data.general

symfinder settings: the symfinder.yaml file

**Do not touch this file
for this tutorial!**



Running symfinder

Only one script to execute: run.sh

Parameters: projects to analyse

Step 1: Fetching the sources

Docker images tag

```
● ● ●
$ ./run.sh jfreechart
Creating resources directory
Creating generated_visualizations directory
Using splc2021-tuto images
Cloning into 'resources/jfreechart'...
Note: switching to 'tags/v1.5.0'.
```

You are in 'detached HEAD' state. You can look around, make experimental changes and commit them, and you can discard any commits you make in this state without impacting any branches by switching back to a branch.

If you want to create a new branch to retain commits you create, you may do so (now or later) by using `-c` with the switch command. Example:

```
git switch -c <new-branch-name>
```

Or undo this operation with:

```
git switch -
```

Turn off this advice by setting config variable `advice.detachedHead` to `false`

```
HEAD is now at fd72df7c Prepare for 1.5.0 release.
HEAD is now at fd72df7c Prepare for 1.5.0 release.
```

Step 2: symfinder analysis

- the runner creates the containers
- symfinder waits for Neo4j to be started
- the analysis starts
 - visitors parse the code and store information in the Neo4j database
 - **may take some time depending on the project's size!**


```

Creating network "varicity-develop_default" with the default driver
Creating symfinder-runner ... done
Attaching to symfinder-runner
symfinder-runner | Cleaning previous execution...
symfinder-runner | Removing network default_default
symfinder-runner | Network default_default not found.
symfinder-runner | Creating network "default_default" with the default driver
symfinder-runner | Creating symfinder-neo4j ...
symfinder-runner | Creating symfinder-neo4j ... done
symfinder-runner | Creating symfinder ...
symfinder-runner | Creating symfinder ... done
symfinder-runner | Attaching to symfinder-neo4j, symfinder
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | Changed password for user 'neo4j'.
symfinder-runner | symfinder | WARNING: sun.reflect.Reflection.getCallerClass is not supported. This will impact performance.
symfinder-runner | symfinder | Jul 30, 2021 9:16:05 AM org.neo4j.driver.internal.logging.JULogger info
symfinder-runner | symfinder | INFO: Direct driver instance 1489933928 created for server address neo4j:7687
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:16:05.503 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Symfinder version: 84ef141e60a9414c842e35abdfb5303dc9a204cf
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | Directories in use:
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | home: /var/lib/neo4j
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | config: /var/lib/neo4j/conf
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | logs: /logs
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | plugins: /plugins
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | import: /var/lib/neo4j/import
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | data: /var/lib/neo4j/data
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | certificates: /var/lib/neo4j/certificates
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | run: /var/lib/neo4j/run
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | Starting Neo4j.
symfinder-runner | symfinder | Waiting for Neo4j database to be ready...
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | 2021-07-30 09:16:06.028+0000 INFO ===== Neo4j 4.0.3 =====
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | 2021-07-30 09:16:06.033+0000 INFO Starting...
symfinder-runner | symfinder | Waiting for Neo4j database to be ready...
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | 2021-07-30 09:16:13.356+0000 INFO Called db.clearQueryCaches(): Query cache already empty.
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | 2021-07-30 09:16:13.404+0000 INFO Bolt enabled on 0.0.0.0:7687.
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | 2021-07-30 09:16:13.405+0000 INFO Started.
symfinder-runner | symfinder-neo4j | 2021-07-30 09:16:13.972+0000 INFO Remote interface available at http://0.0.0.0:7474/
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:16:15.780 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - ClassesVisitor
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:16:16.300 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ClassesVisitor - Class: org.jfree.chart.ui.StrokeChooserPanel
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:16:17.045 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ClassesVisitor - Class: org.jfree.chart.ui.ApplicationFrame
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:16:17.228 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ClassesVisitor - Class: org.jfree.chart.ui.FontChooserPanel
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:16:17.346 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ClassesVisitor - Class: org.jfree.chart.ui.PaintSample
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:16:17.438 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ClassesVisitor - Class: org.jfree.chart.ui.GradientPaintTransformType
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:16:17.532 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ClassesVisitor - Class: org.jfree.chart.ui.StrokeSample

```

the runner creates the containers

symfinder waits for Neo4j to be started

the analysis starts

End of analysis

- after the visitors parsings are finished, the potential vp-s and variants are identified
- statistics on the analysis are displayed and symfinder stops
- the runner stops the containers



```
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:19.953 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ComposeTypeVisitor - Class: org.jfree.data.KeyedObjects2D
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:20.224 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ComposeTypeVisitor - Class:
org.jfree.data.category.IntervalCategoryDataset
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:20.299 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ComposeTypeVisitor - Class:
org.jfree.data.category.DefaultCategoryDataset
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:20.642 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ComposeTypeVisitor - Class:
org.jfree.data.category.SlidingCategoryDataset
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:20.830 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ComposeTypeVisitor - Class:
org.jfree.data.category.CategoryToPieDataset
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:20.984 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ComposeTypeVisitor - Class: org.jfree.data.category.CategoryDataset
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:20.985 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ComposeTypeVisitor - Class: org.jfree.data.category.CategoryRangeInfo
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:21.011 [main] INFO visitors.SymfinderVisitor - Visitor: visitors.ComposeTypeVisitor - Class:
org.jfree.data.category.DefaultIntervalCategoryDataset
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:21.417 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - visitors.ComposeTypeVisitor execution time: 00:02:17.476
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.381 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of VPs: 926
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.385 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of methods VPs: 454
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.388 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of constructors VPs: 213
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.395 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of method level VPs: 667
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.396 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of class level VPs: 259
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.427 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of variants: 1923
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.430 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of methods variants: 1061
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.433 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of constructors variants: 587
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.439 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of method level variants: 1648
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.440 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of class level variants: 275
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.452 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of nodes: 9526
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.461 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of relationships: 11438
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:27.470 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Number of corrected inheritance relationships: 265/1478
symfinder-runner | symfinder | Jul 30, 2021 9:21:28 AM org.neo4j.driver.internal.logging.JULLogger info
symfinder-runner | symfinder | INFO: Closing driver instance 1489933928
symfinder-runner | symfinder | Jul 30, 2021 9:21:28 AM org.neo4j.driver.internal.logging.JULLogger info
symfinder-runner | symfinder | INFO: Closing connection pool towards neo4j:7687
symfinder-runner | symfinder | 09:21:28.701 [main] MY_LEVEL Symfinder - Total execution time: 00:05:23.198
symfinder-runner | symfinder exited with code 0
symfinder-runner | Stopping symfinder-neo4j ...
symfinder-runner | Stopping symfinder-neo4j ... done
symfinder-runner | Aborting on container exit...
symfinder-runner | Removing symfinder ...
symfinder-runner | Removing symfinder-neo4j ...
symfinder-runner | Removing symfinder ... done
symfinder-runner | Removing symfinder-neo4j ... done
```

vp-s and variants
identified, statistics on the
analysis are displayed and
symfinder stops

the runner stops the containers

End of analysis

```
$ ./visualization.sh
Creating network "symfinder-2_default" with the default driver
Creating visualization ... done
Attaching to visualization
```



Step 3: accessing the visualization

Focus on
this part



localhost:8181

Symfinder

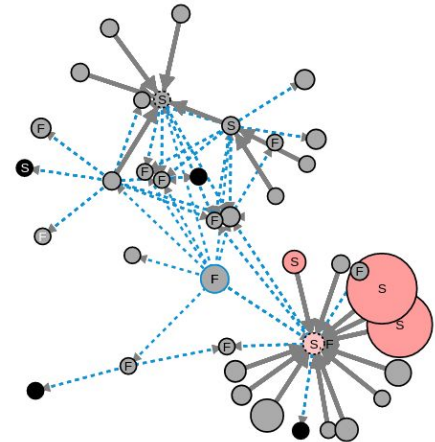
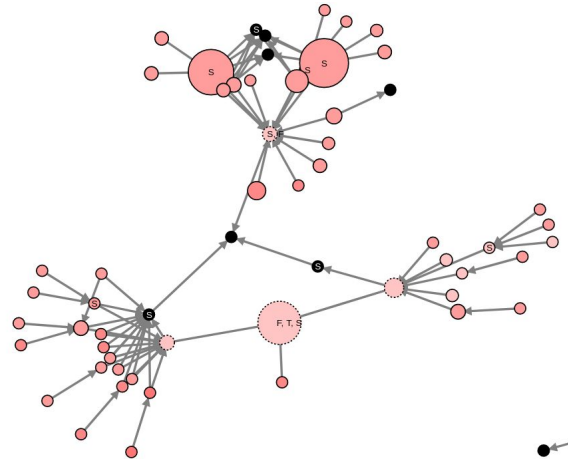
Experiments

Global visualization relying on inheritance (symfinder)

jfreechart-v1.5.0

Fine-grained visualization relying on composition (symfinder-2)

jfreechart-v1.5.0



First contact: running an existing experiment

Clone symfinder's repository and checkout the "tutorial" tag

Run symfinder on JFreeChart

Display the visualization



```
~ $ git clone https://github.com/DeathStar3/symfinder-SPLC2021-tutorial
~ $ cd symfinder-SPLC2021-tutorial
~/symfinder-SPLC2021-tutorial $ git checkout tutorial
~/symfinder-SPLC2021-tutorial $ ./run.sh jfreechart
~/symfinder-SPLC2021-tutorial $ ./visualization.sh
```

Repository's URL: <https://github.com/DeathStar3/symfinder-SPLC2021-tutorial/>

Requirements in the REQUIREMENTS.md file

Guided use of symfinder

Adapting symfinder for your project

1. Edit the **experiments/experiments.yaml** to add your project.



2. Relaunch symfinder on your project

```
~/symfinder $ ./run.sh <project_name>
```

```
<project_name>:  
  repositoryUrl: <repository_url>  
  sourcePackage: <directory_path>  
  tagIds:  
    - <tag_ids>  
  commitIds:  
    - <commit_ids>  
  filters:  
    - <classes>
```

Hall of fame

The hall of fame of the tutorial will contain the visualizations you obtained on **your projects!**

If you wish to send us your visualizations:

- zip the **generated_visualizations** directory;
- send it to us by mail:
 - johann [dot] mortara [at] univ-cotedazur [dot] fr
 - philippe [dot] collet [at] univ-cotedazur [dot] fr

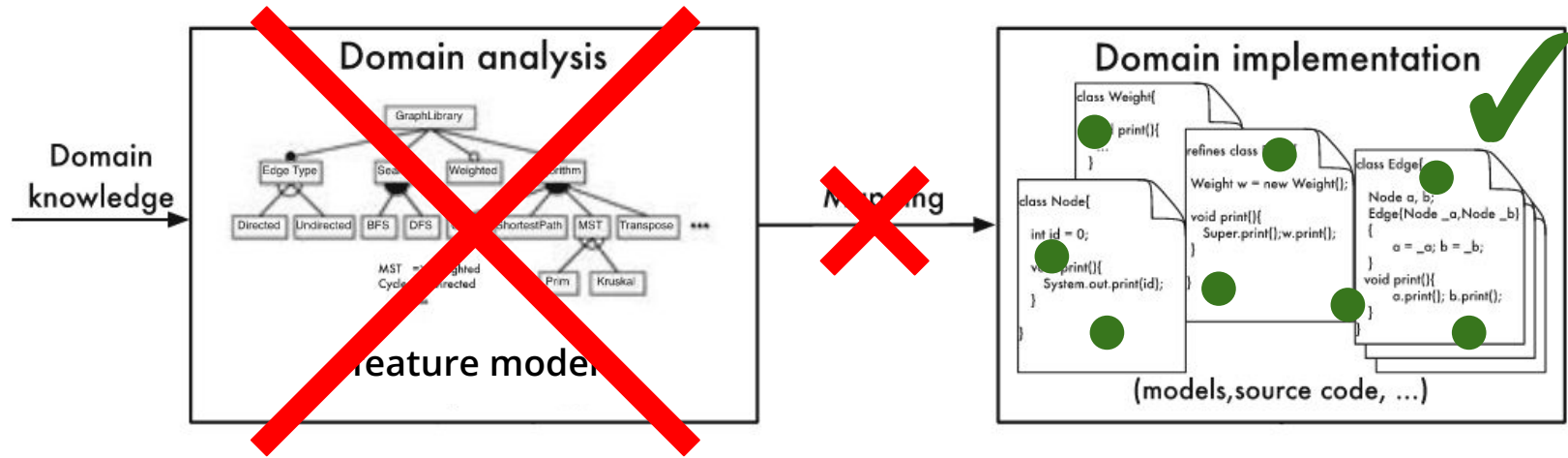
Wrapping up & Exchange time

Wrap up

What you saw in this tutorial:

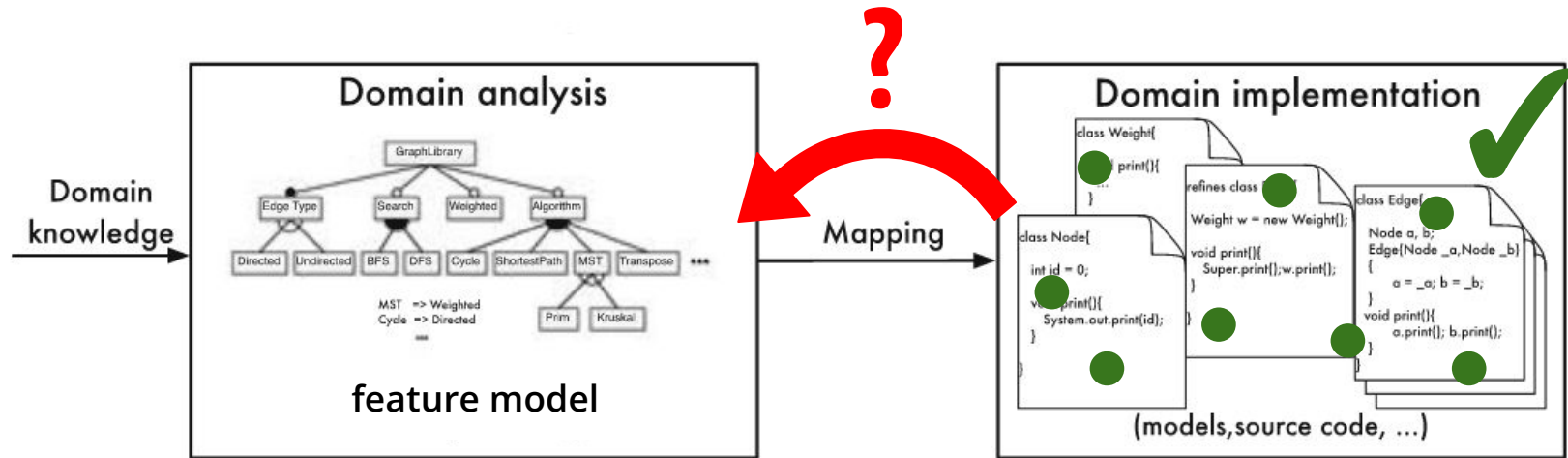
- Background on variability implementation in OO systems, and challenges around their identification
- Introduction on the notion of symmetry in OO constructs
- The symfinder toolchain
 - how the toolchain uses density of symmetries to identify vp-s and variants in a single Java codebase
 - practical application on your systems

Potential variability implementations identified!

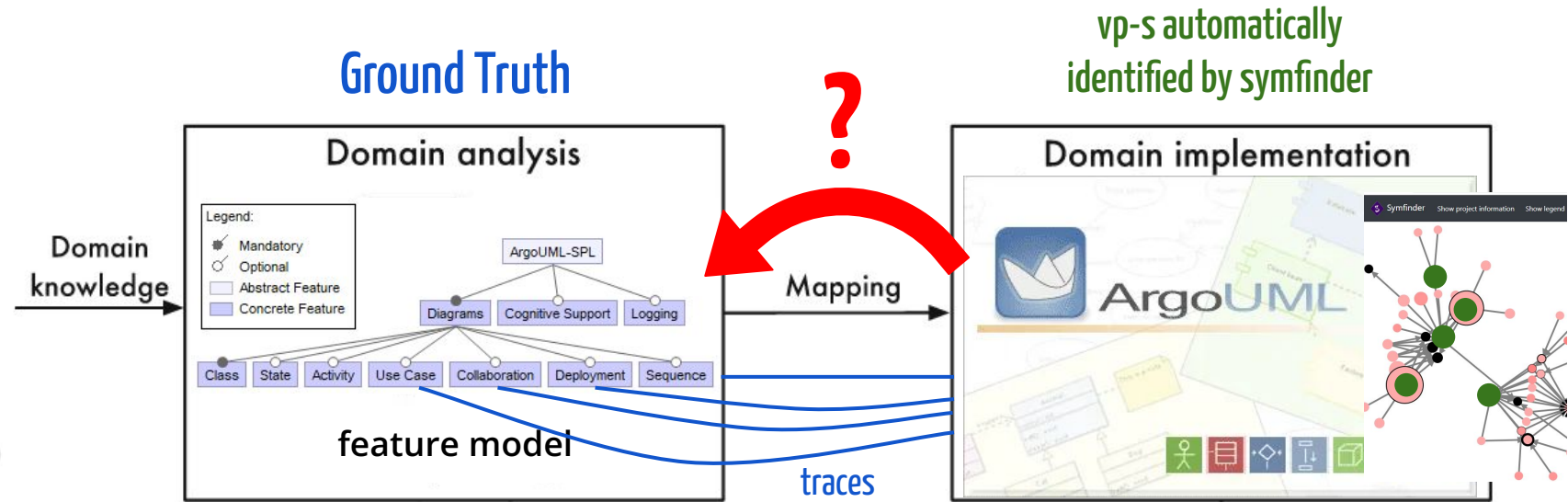


Potential variability implementations identified!

but are they relevant w.r.t. existing features?



Application to a case study: ArgoUML



Question: Are the identified *vp-s* from ArgoUML relevant for a feature mapping?

Mapping vp-s and variants to features

Precision

Percentage of identified vp-s and variants that could be mapped to domain features

38%

- coarse grain features based on superficial domain knowledge
- not all identified places with a symmetry are related to variability

Recall

Percentage of features' traces that could be mapped to identified vp-s and variants

83%

The missing 17% of traces are not variability related (initialization classes, external libraries)

Mapping vp-s and variants to features

Precision

Percentage of identified vp-s and variants that could be mapped to domain features

38%

- coarse grain features based on superficial domain knowledge
- not all identified places with a symmetry are related to variability

Recall

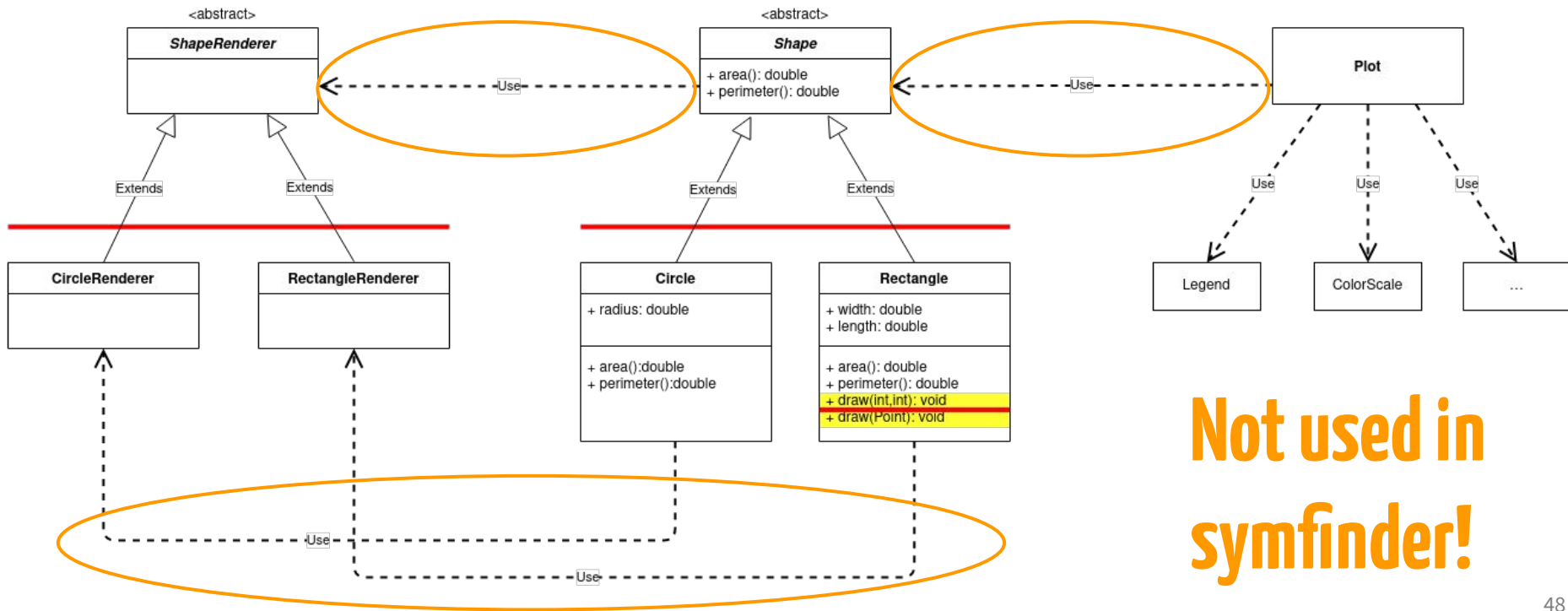
Percentage of features' traces that could be mapped to identified vp-s and variants

83%

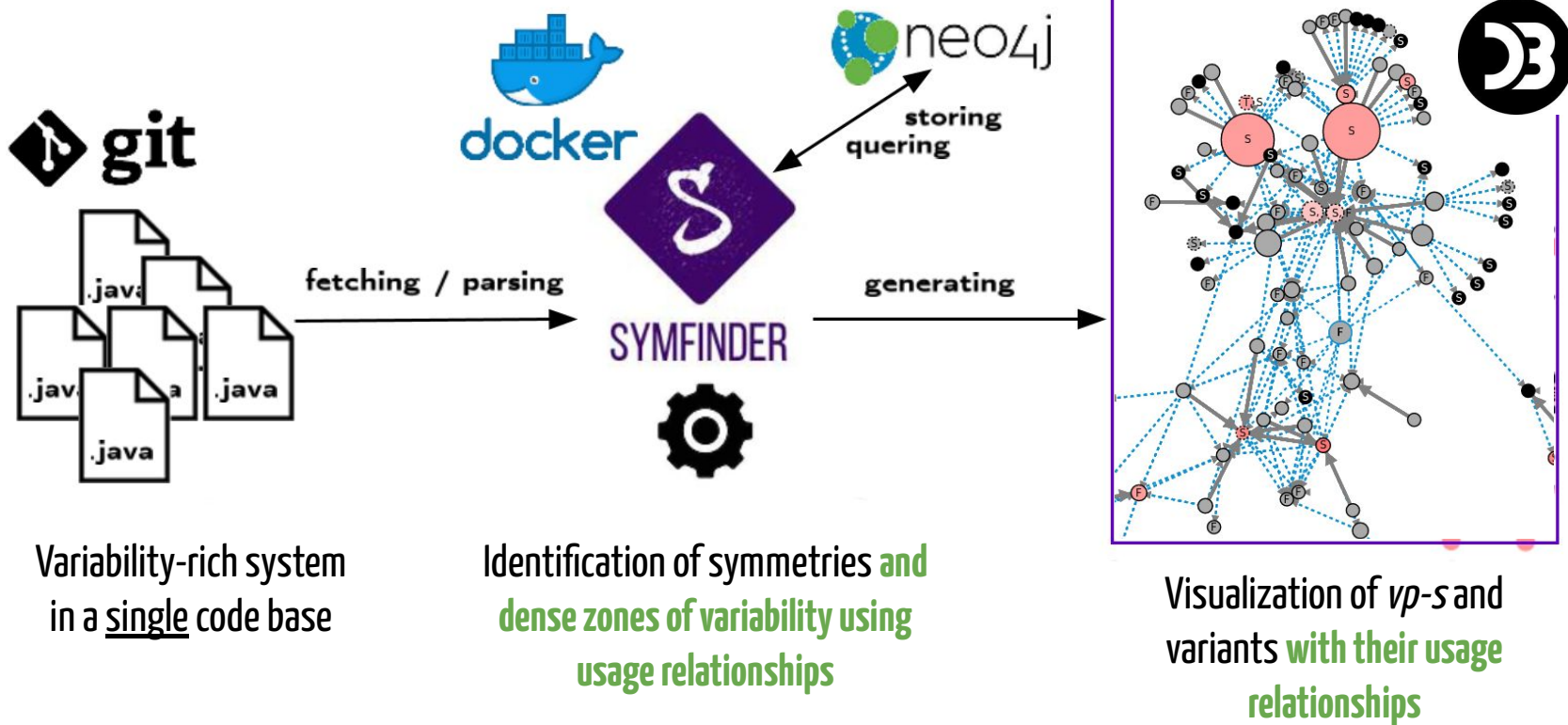
The missing 17% of traces are not variability related (initialization classes, external libraries)

⇒ need for a more precise detection method

Extending the identification method



symfinder-2



Variability-rich system
in a single code base

Identification of symmetries and
dense zones of variability using
usage relationships

Visualization of *vp-s* and
variants with their usage
relationships

Package/class to filter Add new filter

Some entry point class Add an entry point class

Usage-type

Hybrid view

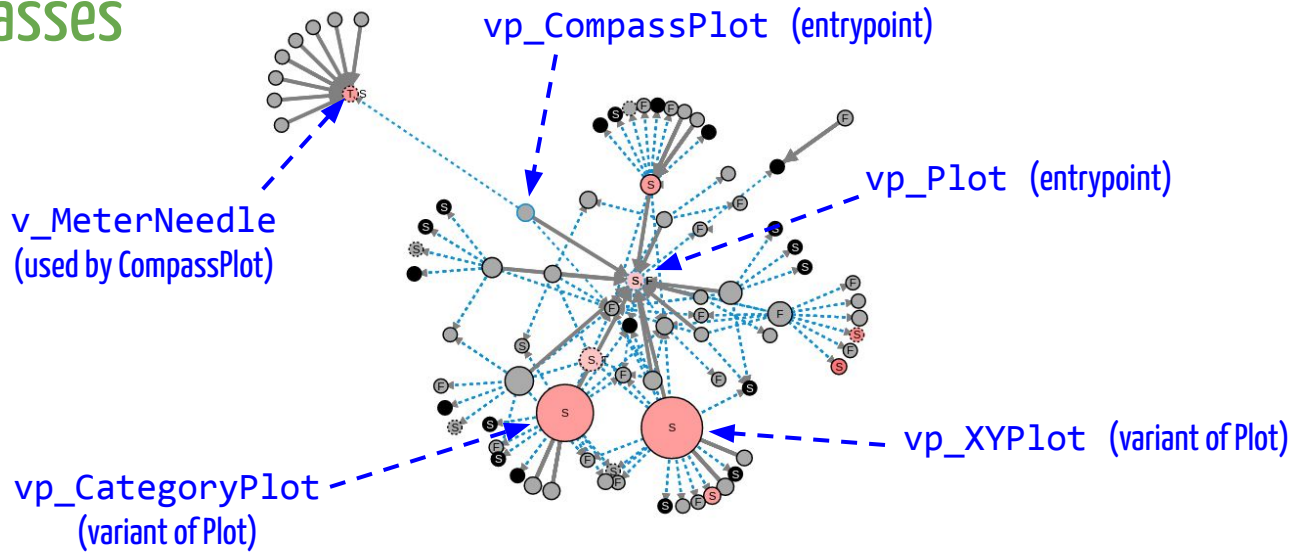
Number of class level VPs: 259
 Number of method level VPs: 667
 Number of class level variants: 275
 Number of method level variants: 1648

Packages filtered out (3 packages) +

- Entry point classes filtered in (2 classes) +
- org.jfree.chart.plot.CompassPlot x
 - org.jfree.chart.plot.Plot x

Usage-level

View shaped with entrypoint classes



Package/class to filter Add new filter

Some entry point class Add an entry point class

Usage-type
OUT

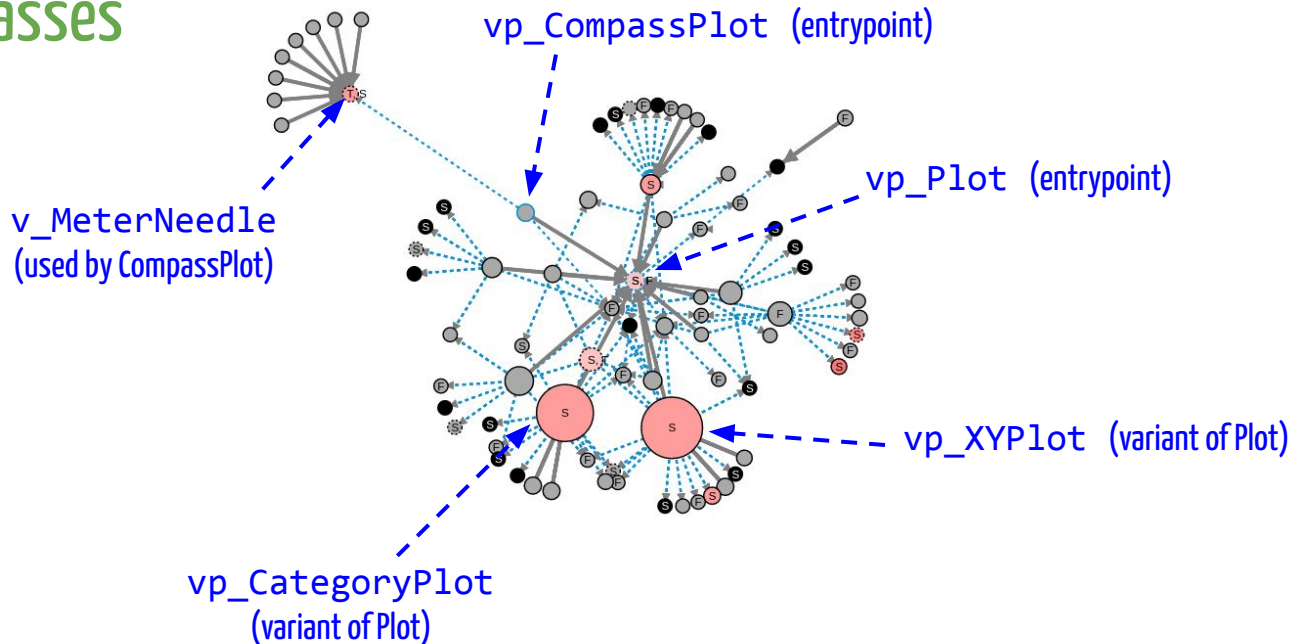
Hybrid view
Number of class level VPs: 259
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Packages filtered out (3 packages)

- Entry point classes filtered in (2 classes)
- org.jfree.chart.plot.CompassPlot
 - org.jfree.chart.plot.Plot

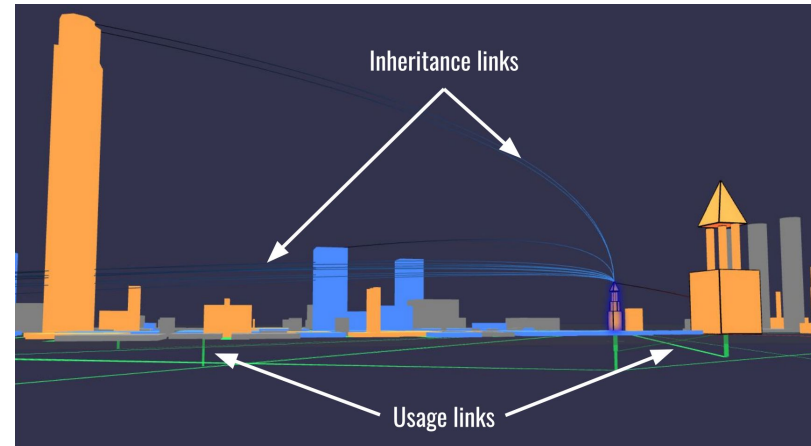
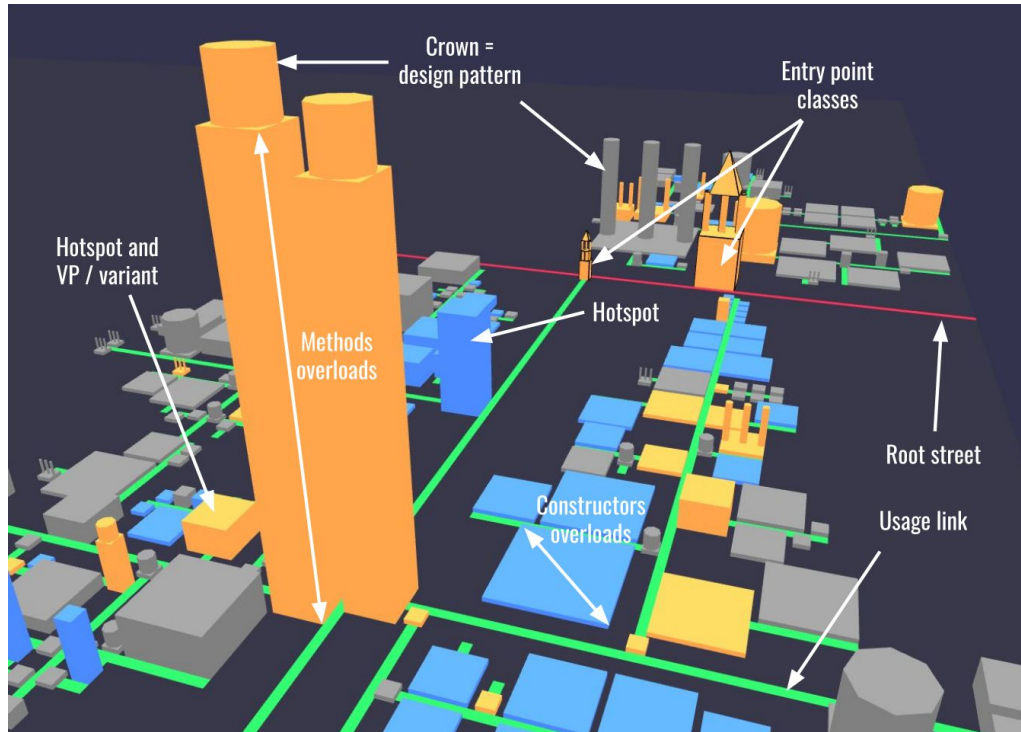
Usage-level
2

View shaped with entrypoint classes

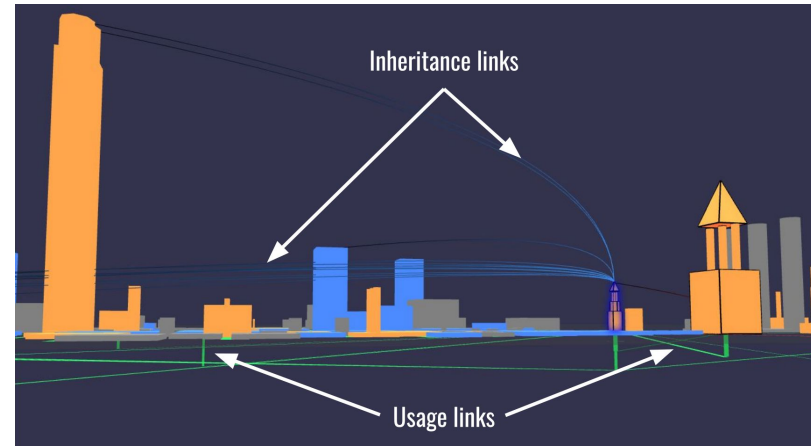
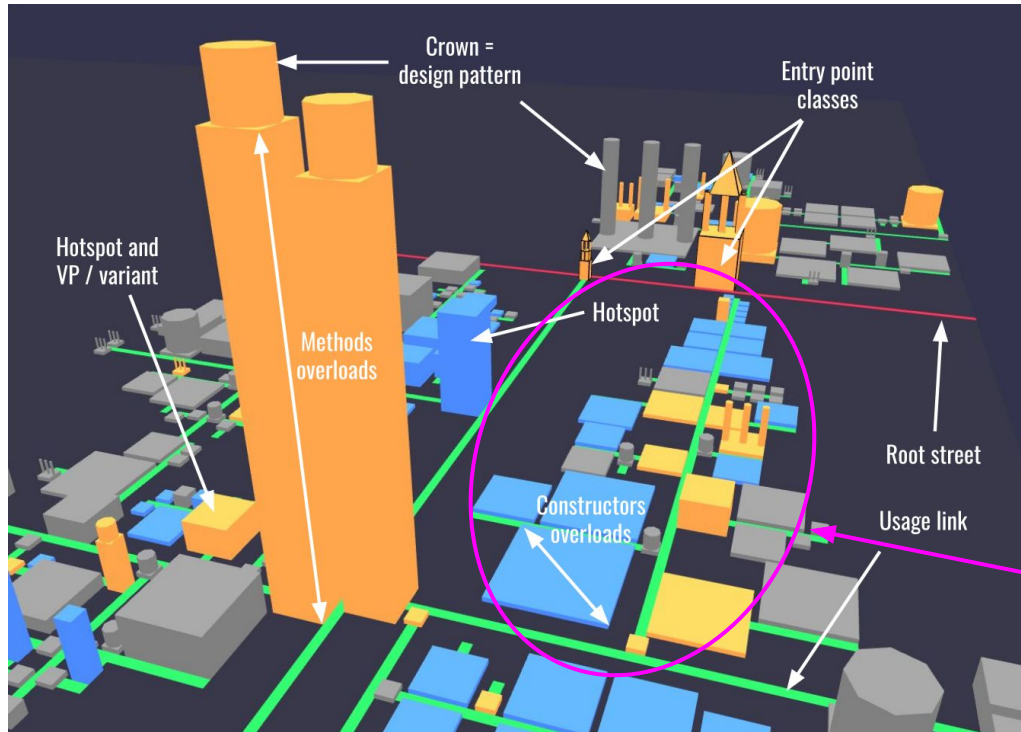


but

VariCity: visualizing variability implementations as a city



VariCity: visualizing variability implementations as a city



Density of variability implementations

Limitations / future work

Toolchain can analyze OO variability implementations projects in Java and C++

but no support for other OO languages (Python, JavaScript...) or implementation techniques

⇒ extend the toolchain support

Parameterized density gives first results

but need to understand how to determine these parameters for a project

⇒ need to analyze projects with ≠ architectures to understand better



Non exhaustive list of topics

1. Time of the conducted analyses on the different systems
2. Discussions on observed variability implementations and architectures
3. Discussion on the usage of the different features of the symfinder visualization
4. Feedback on the experience and possible improvements

Thanks to SPLC'21 sponsors!



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How I Met Your Implemented Variability: Identification in Object-Oriented Systems with symfinder

Johann Mortara – Philippe Collet

Tutorial's website:

<https://deathstar3.github.io/SPLC2021-symfinder-tutorial/>

Mail addresses to send your visualizations for the hall of fame:

- johann [dot] mortara [at] univ-cotedazur [dot] fr
- philippe [dot] collet [at] univ-cotedazur [dot] fr

**Thank you for
attending!**

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