

# Cryptanalysis Strikes Back A Realistic assessment of leakage attacks on Encrypted Search

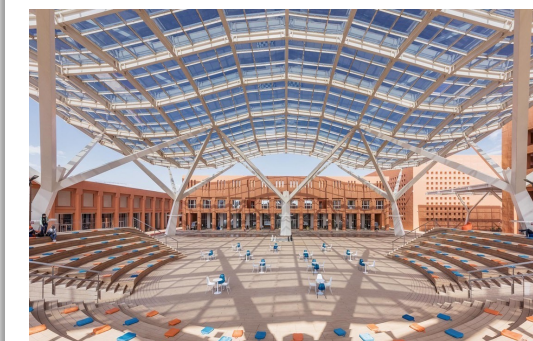
**Abdelkarim Kati**<sup>†‡</sup>

<sup>†</sup>School of Computer Science,  
Mohammed VI Polytechnic University.

<sup>‡</sup> Encrypted Systems Lab, Brown University.

January 24, 2023 at Aarhus University.

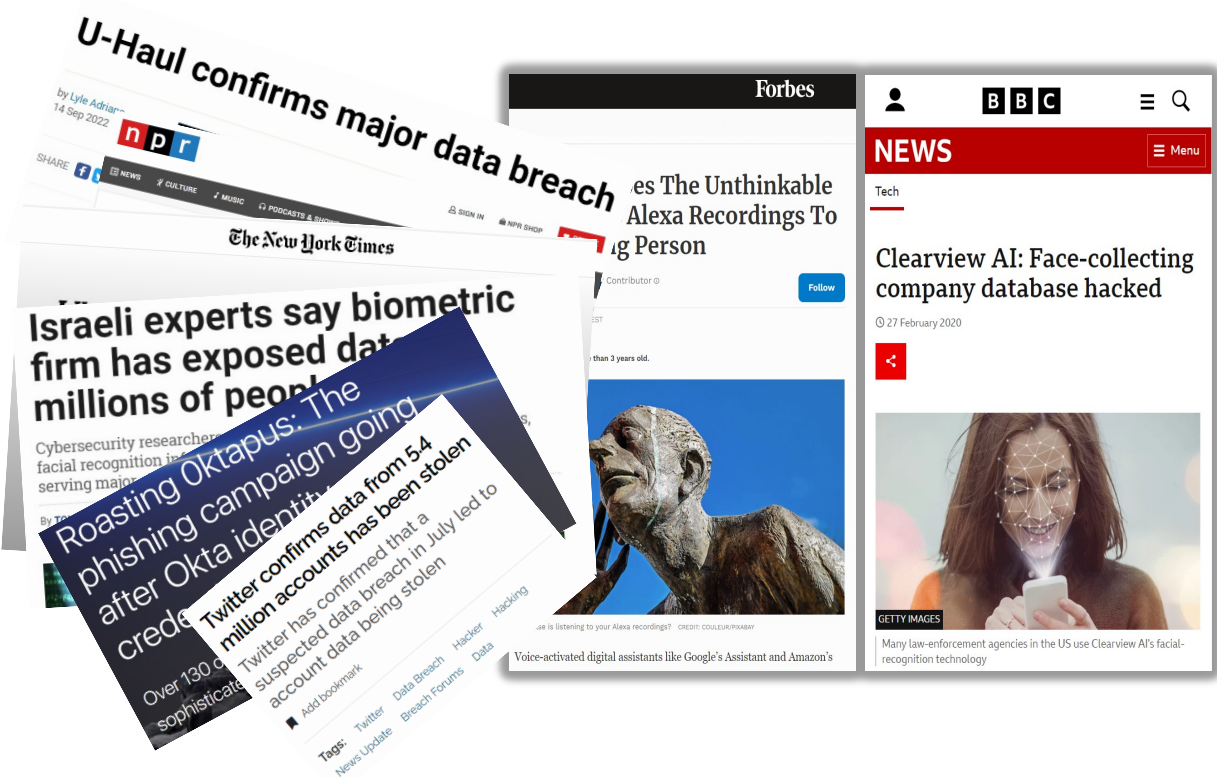
Some Slides were adapted from A.Trieber RWC'22 Talk.



# A Realistic assessment of leakage attacks on Encrypted Search

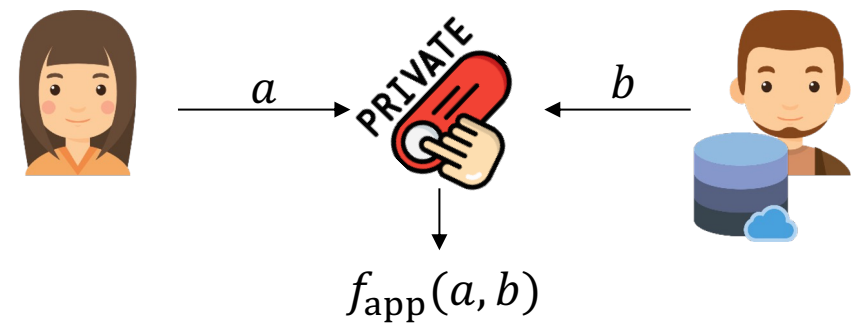
## Motivation

### Real-World Applications



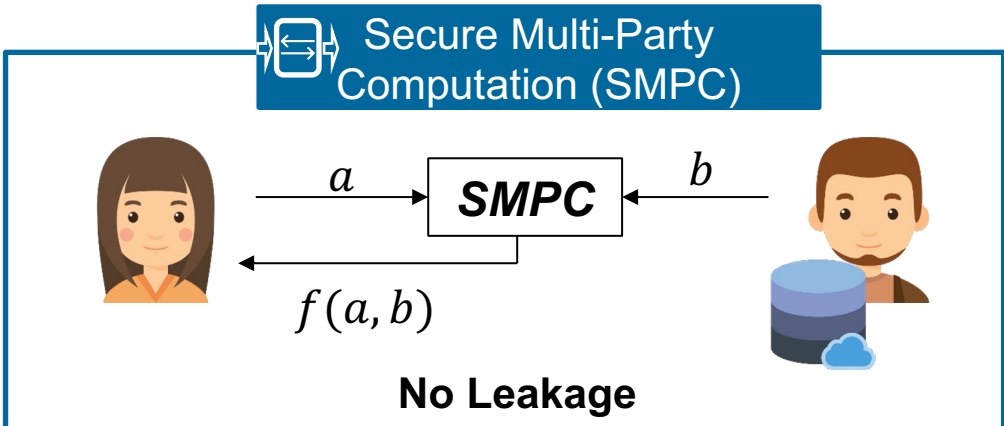
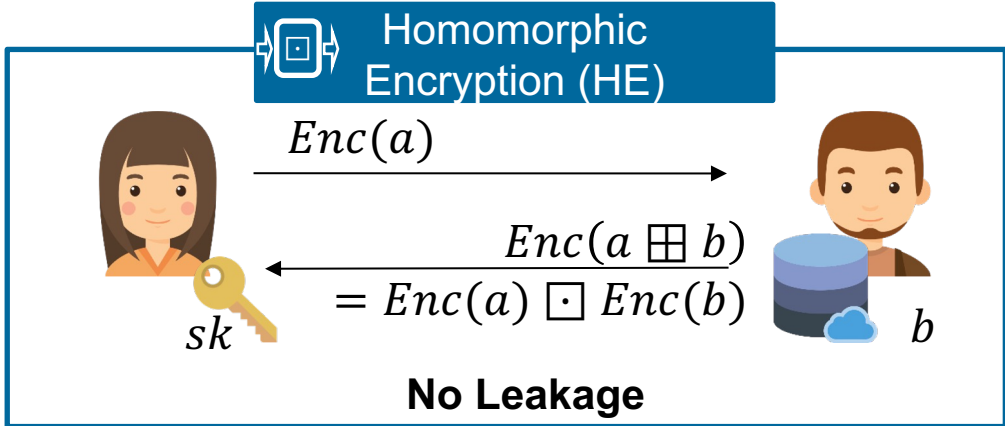
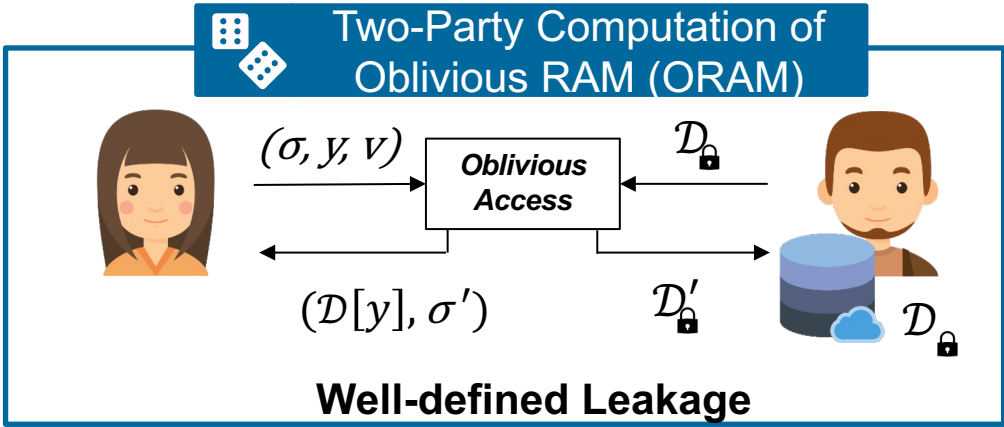
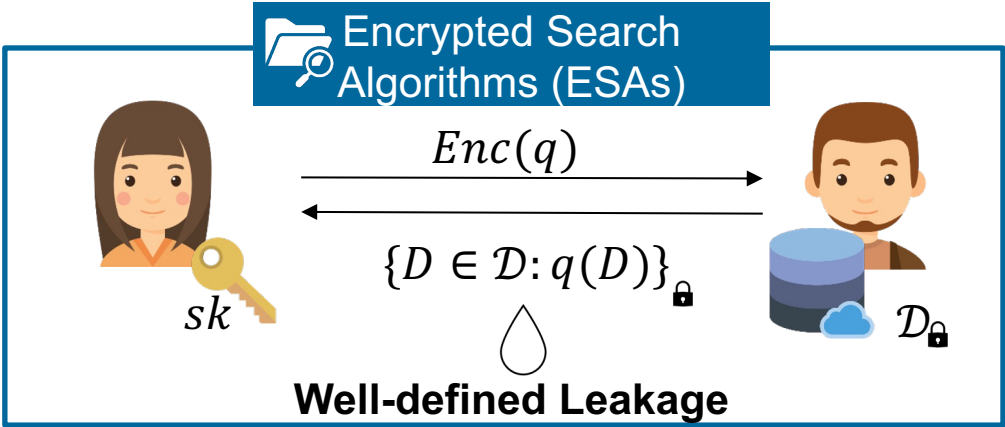
**Leakage = erosion of privacy w.r.t data protection**

### Cryptographic Mechanisms



### **Privacy-Enhancing Technologies (PETs)**

# A Realistic assessment of leakage attacks on Encrypted Search

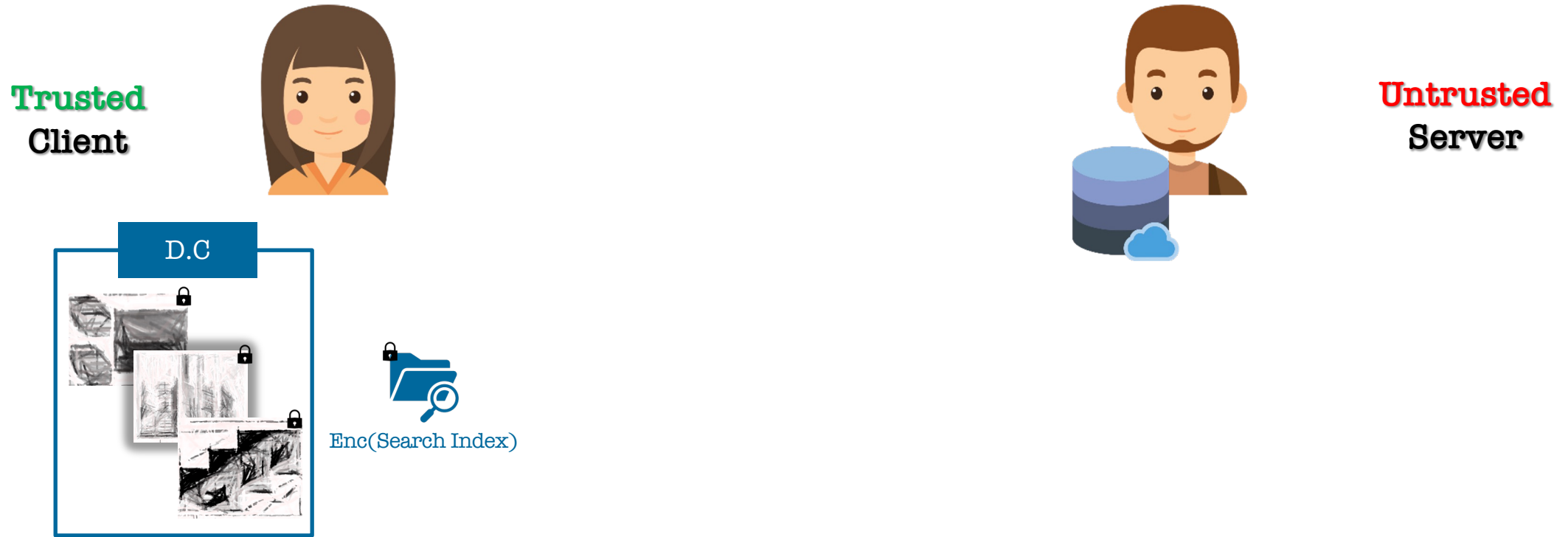


## A Realistic assessment of leakage attacks on **Encrypted Search**

# Encrypted Search Algorithms (ESAs)



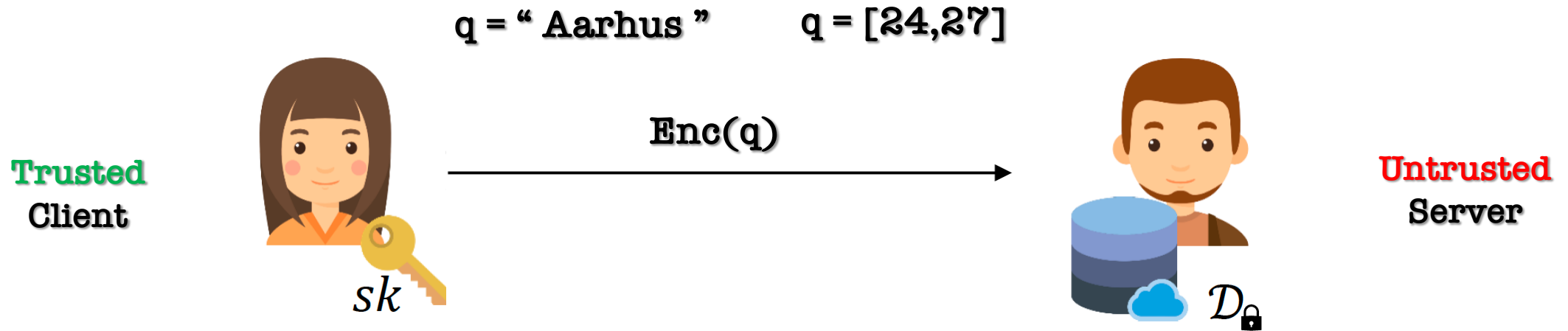
# Encrypted Search Algorithms (ESAs)



## Encrypted Search Algorithms (ESAs)

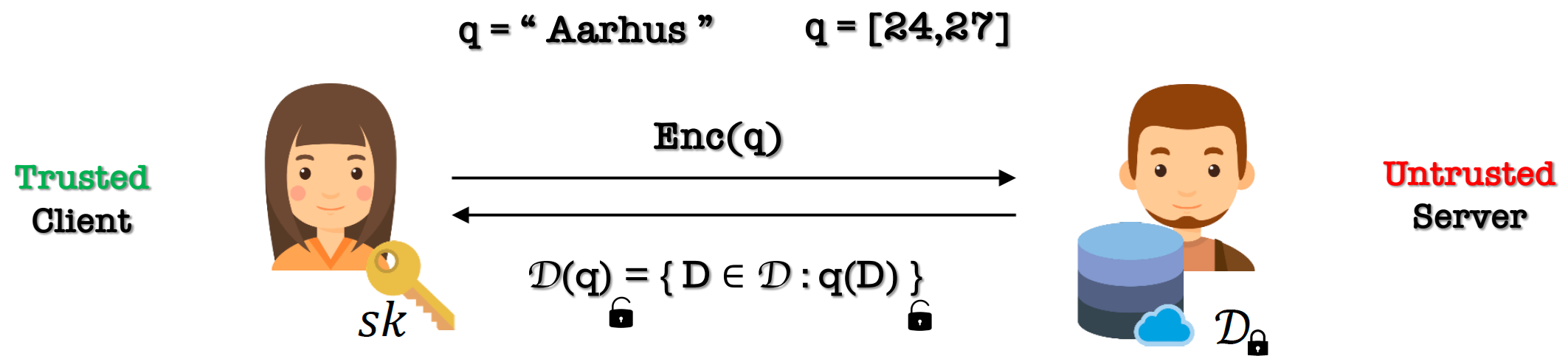


## Encrypted Search Algorithms (ESAs)

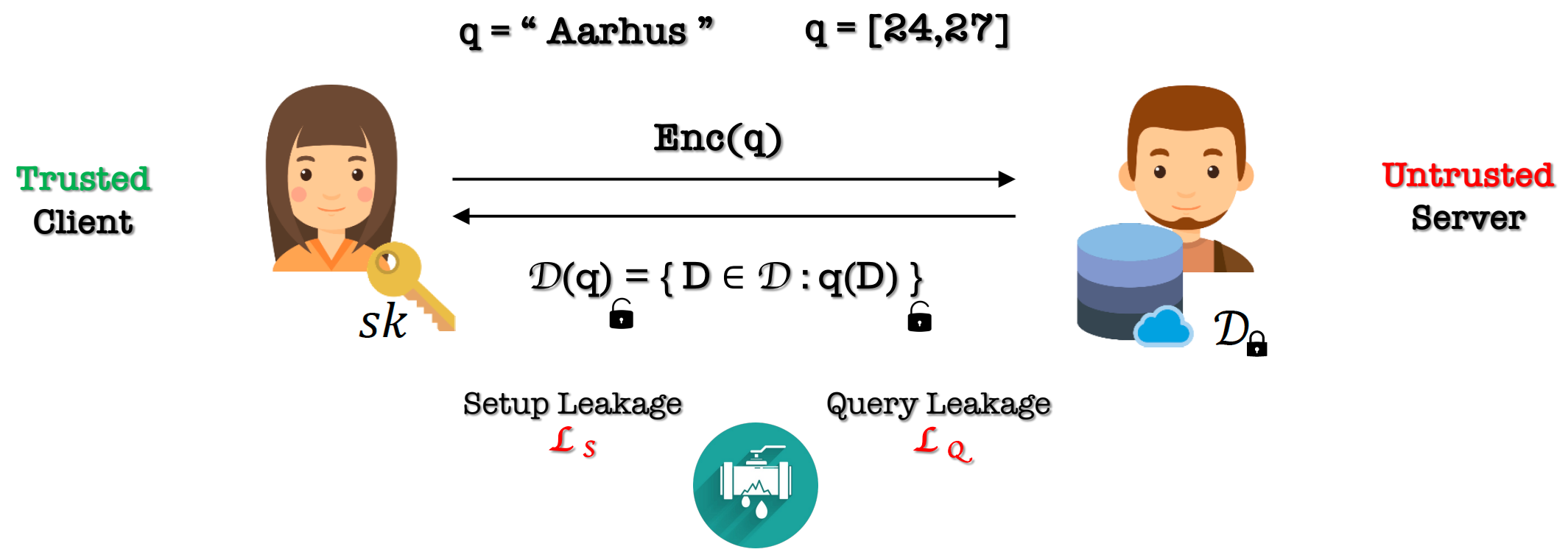




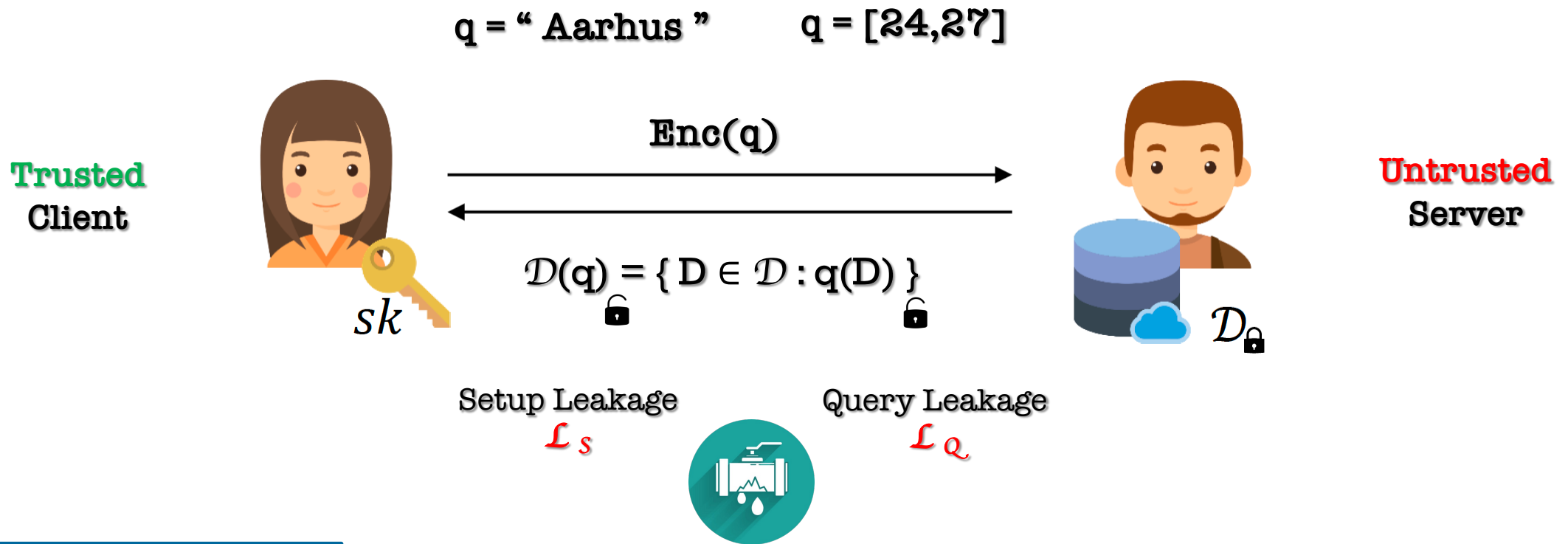
# Encrypted Search Algorithms (ESAs)



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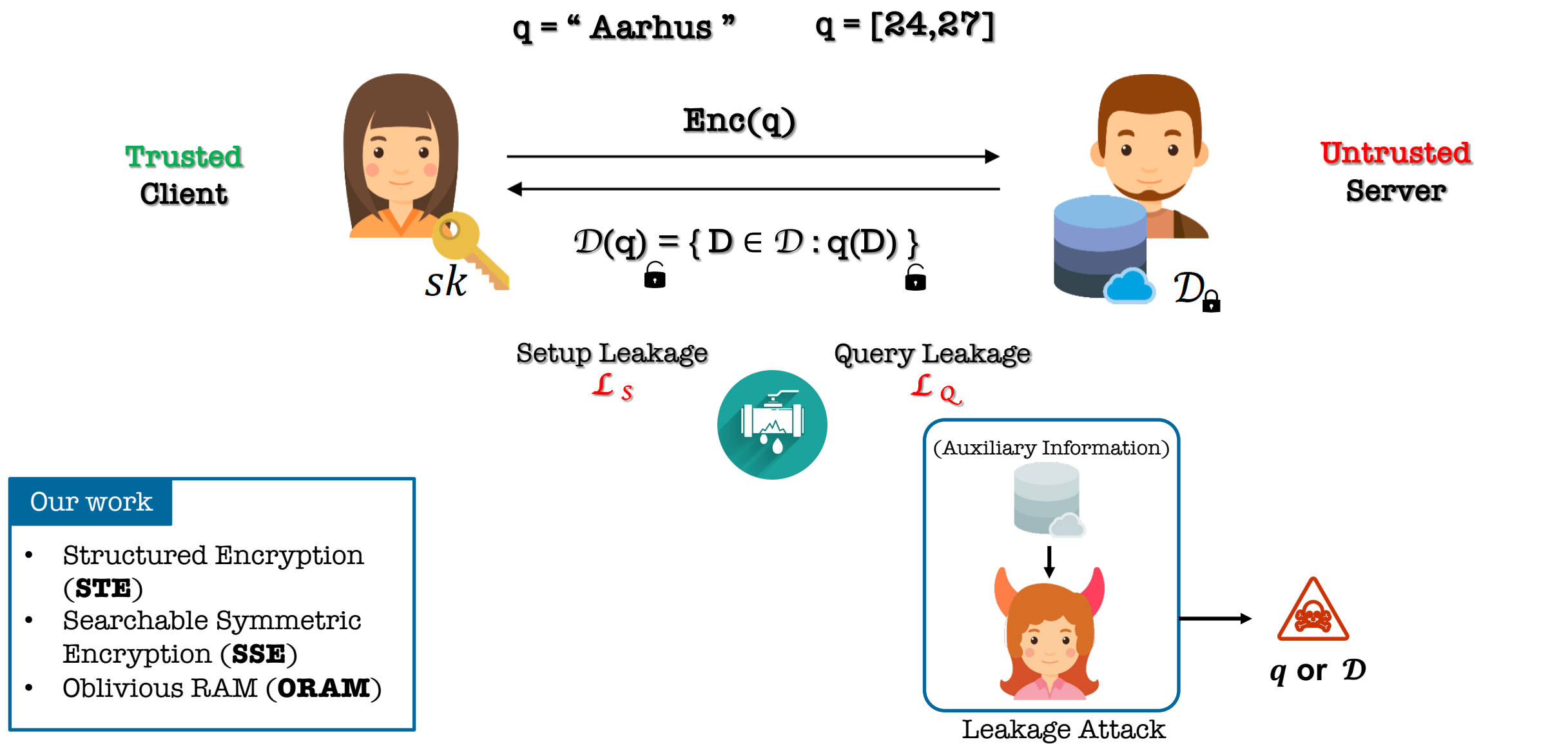
## Encrypted Search Algorithms (ESAs)



### Our work

- Structured Encryption (**STE**)
- Searchable Symmetric Encryption (**SSE**)
- Oblivious RAM (**ORAM**)

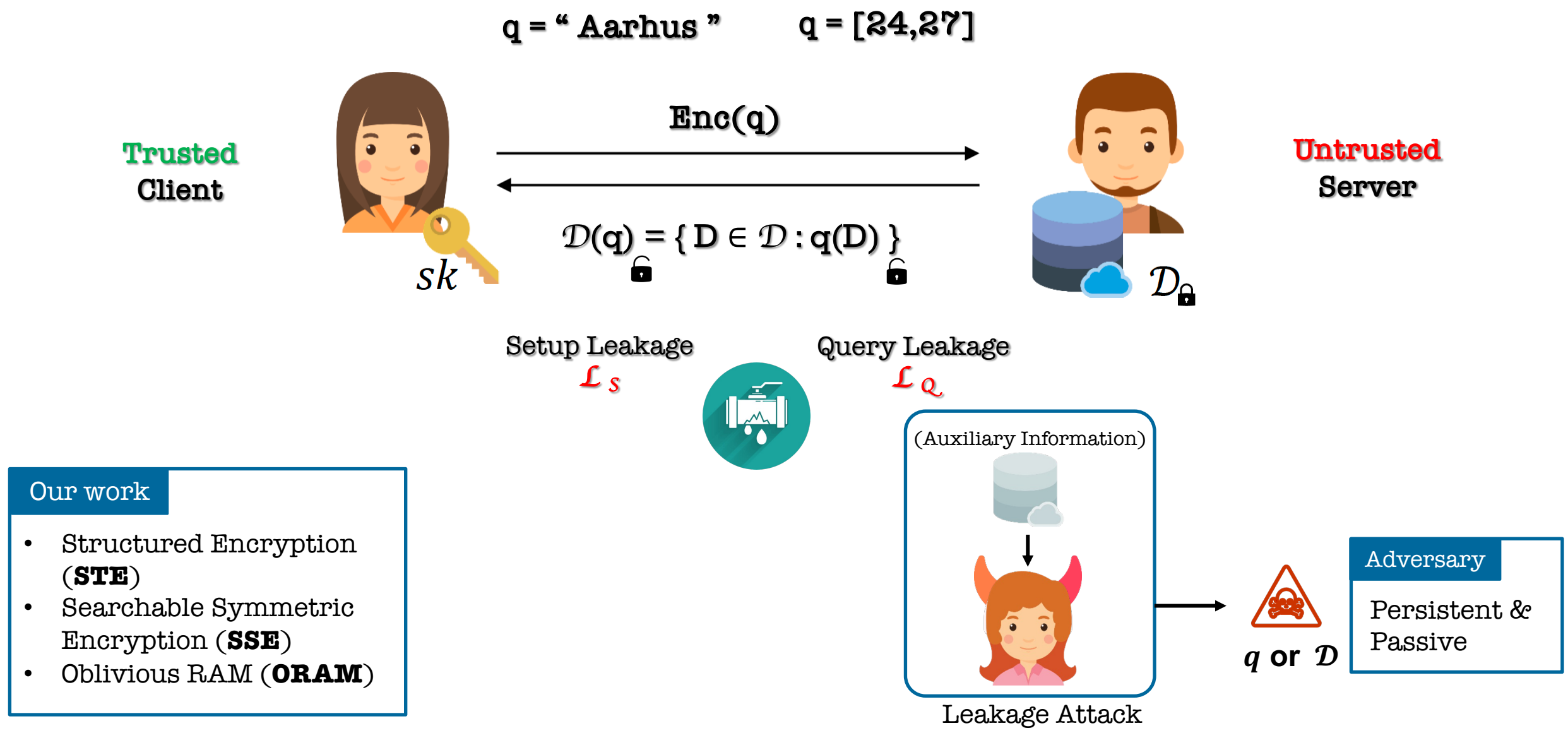
# Encrypted Search Algorithms (ESAs)



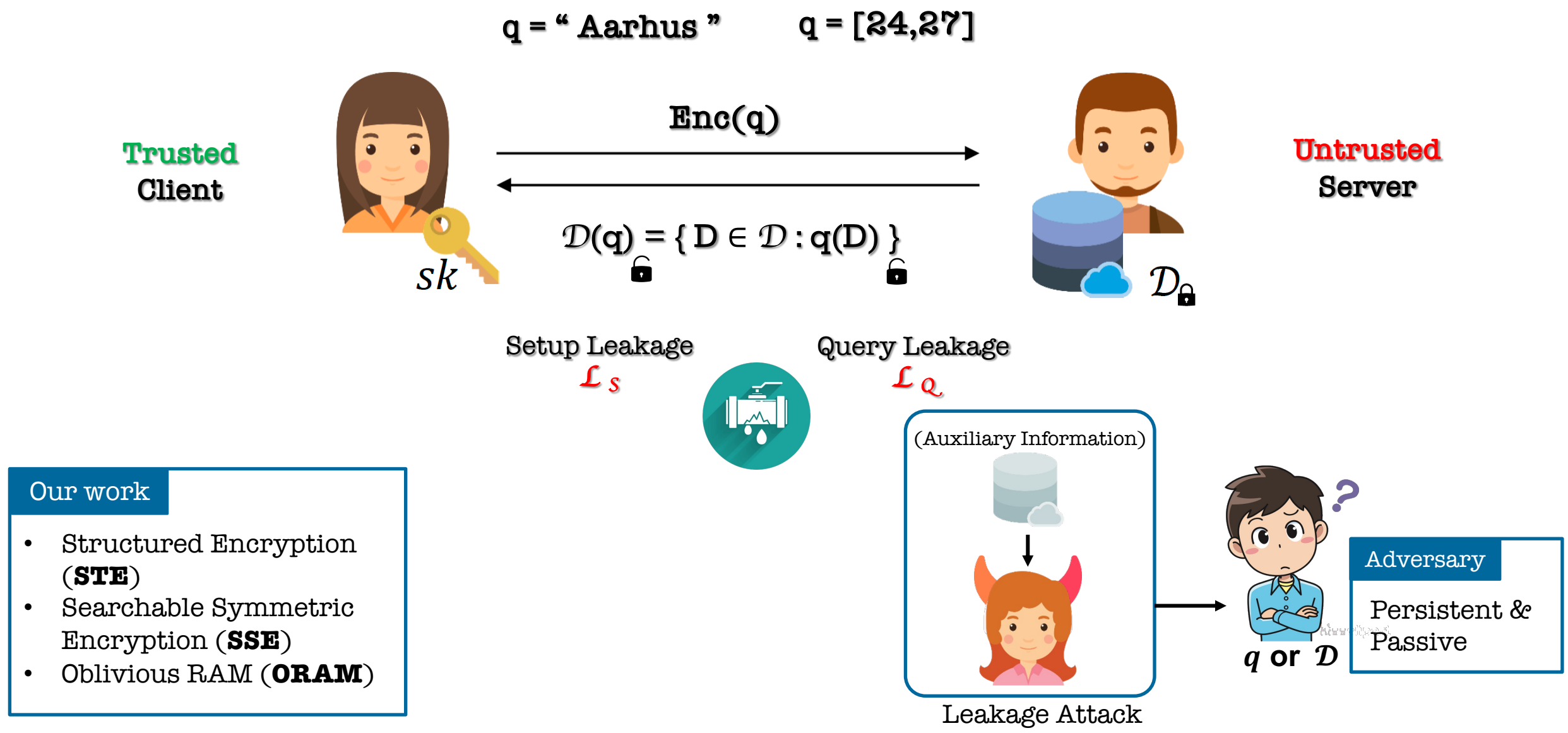
Our work

- Structured Encryption (**STE**)
- Searchable Symmetric Encryption (**SSE**)
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# Encrypted Search Algorithms (ESAs)



# Encrypted Search Algorithms (ESAs)




- Our work**
- Structured Encryption (**STE**)
  - Searchable Symmetric Encryption (**SSE**)
  - Oblivious RAM (**ORAM**)


## A Realistic assessment of **Leakage Attacks** on Encrypted Search

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# How do we model Leakage ?

- The "Baseline" leakage profile for response-revealing EMMs
  - ✓  $(\mathcal{L}_s, \mathcal{L}_q, \mathcal{L}_u) = (\text{dsize}, (\text{qeq}, \text{rid}), \text{usize})$
- The "Baseline" leakage profile for response-hiding EMMs
  - ✓  $(\mathcal{L}_s, \mathcal{L}_q, \mathcal{L}_u) = (\text{dsize}, \text{qeq}, \text{usize})$
- Several new constructions have better leakage profiles
  - ✓ AZL and FZL [[Kamara-Moataz-Ohirimenko'18](#)]
  - ✓ VHL and AVHL [[Kamara-Moataz'19](#)]



Leakage 	Information
Response Length	$ D(q) $
Query Equality	$q_i = q_j$
Co-Occurrence	$ D(q_i) \cap D(q_j) $
Response Identity	$\{i: D_i \in q(D)\}$
Response Volumes	$\{ D_i _b: D_i \in q(D)\}$

(Simplified)



# Leakage Attacks Types



**Keyword** (point) queries  
[IKK12,CGPR15,BKM20,RPH21]



Keyword	Document IDs
'Aarhus'	2,5,11,13,20,31
'systems'	3,5,10,11,13,25
'lab'	5,11,21,27

$$q = w$$
$$\mathcal{D}(q) = \{D \in \mathcal{D} : q \in D\}$$

Recover  $q$

$q = \text{'Aarhus'}$

**Known-data:** Adversary knows subset of  $\mathcal{D}$



**Range** queries  
[KKNO16,LMP18,GLMP18,  
GLMP19,GJW19,KPT20,KPT21]



ID	Age
1	65
2	7
3	27

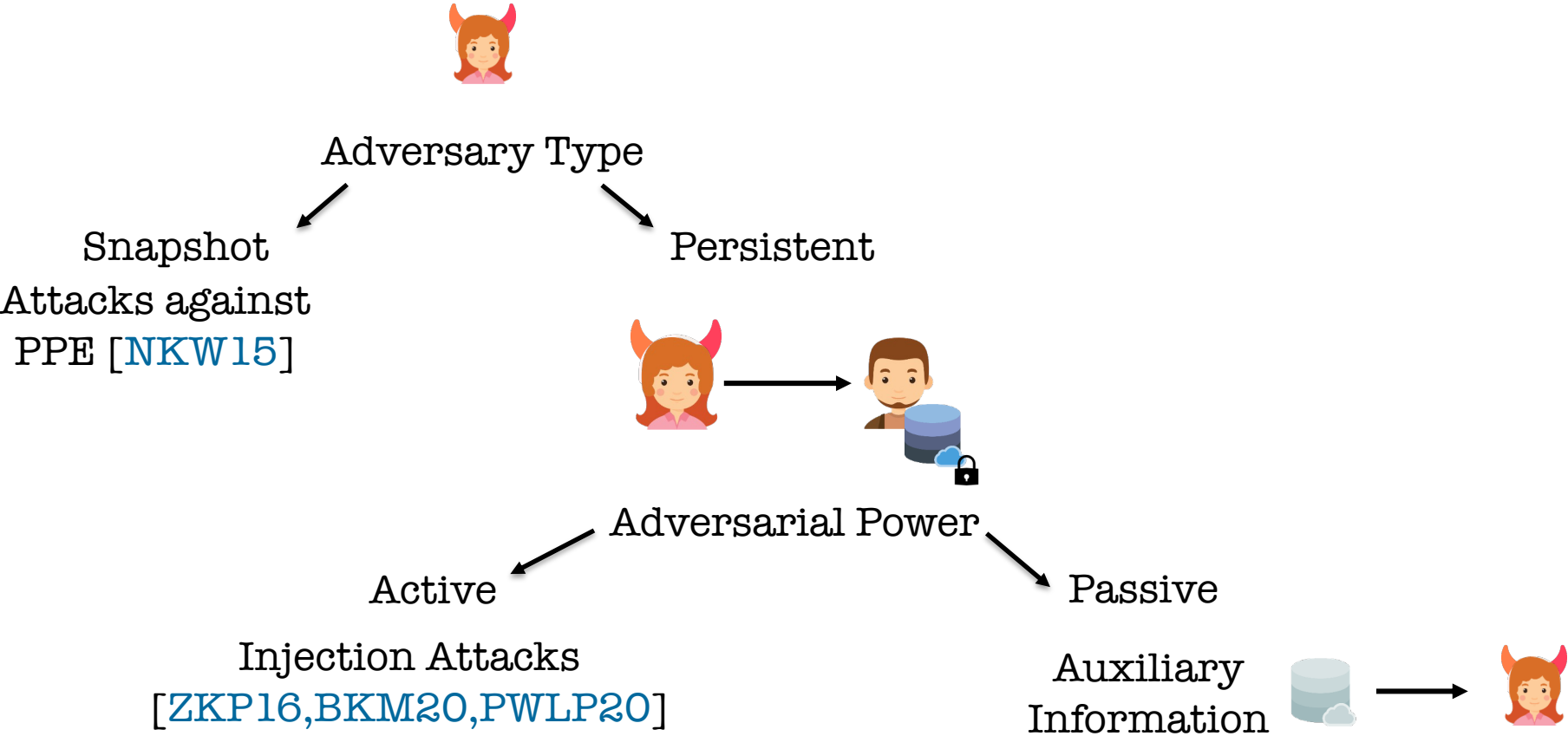
$$q = (a, b)$$
$$\mathcal{D}(q) = \{r \in \mathcal{D} : a \leq r \leq b\}$$

Recover  $\mathcal{D}$

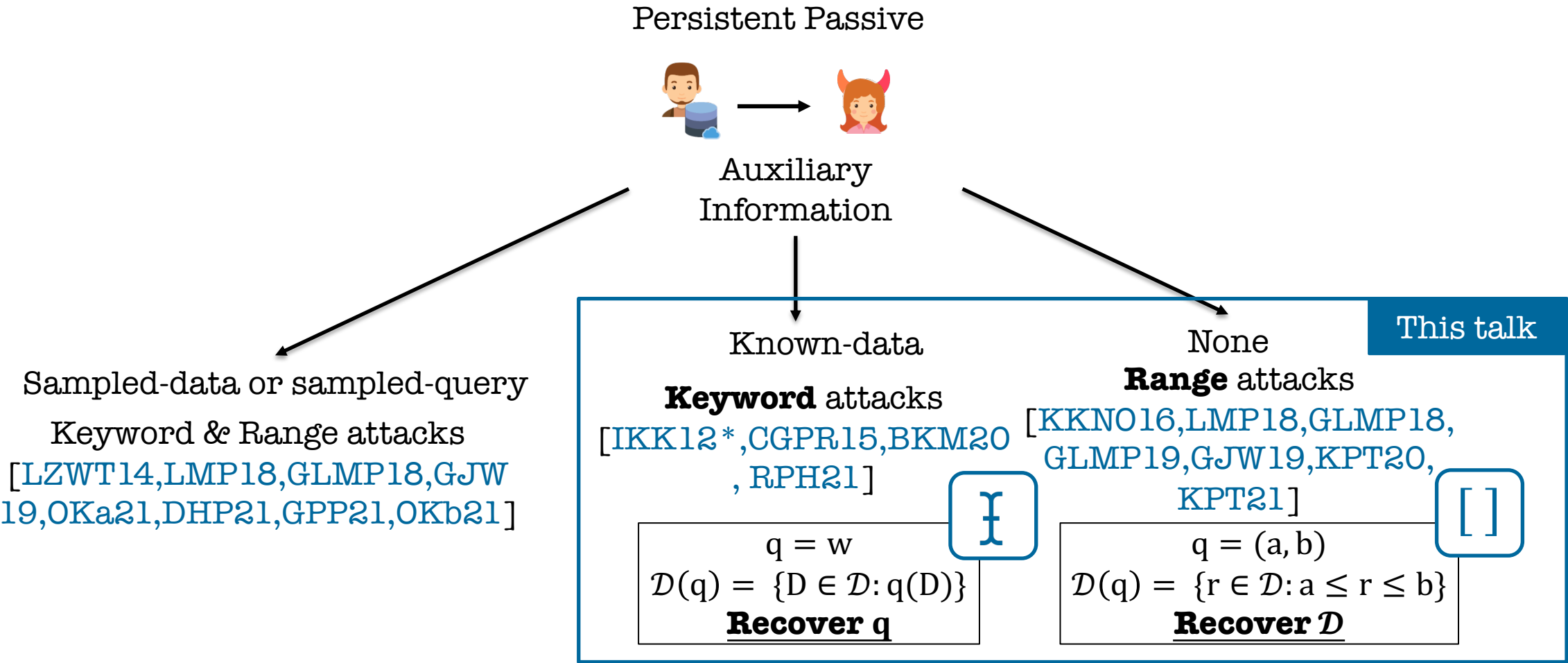
$q = (18,39)$

No auxiliary knowledge

# Leakage Attacks against ESAs



# Leakage Attacks against ESAs

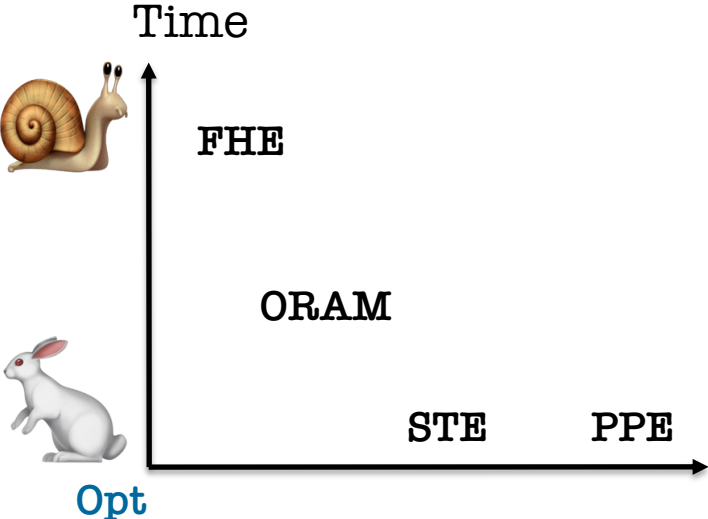


# ESAs Techniques Overview



Technique	Leakage	Query Time	
Fully Homomorphic Encryption (FHE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>None</li></ul>	Linear	} Considered secure but inefficient
Oblivious RAM (ORAM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Response Length + Volume</li></ul>	Sublinear	
Structured Encryption (STE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Query Equality</li><li>Response Identities + Volumes</li></ul>	Optimal	} Considered efficient and ???
Property-Preserving Encryption (PPE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ciphertext Equality</li><li>Ciphertext Order</li></ul>	Optimal	

Our work





## Constructions

- “ Benign leakage ”
- “ Common leakage ”
- “ Standard leakage ”
- “ Accepted leakage ”
- “ [Attacks] assume extremely strong adversarial models ”
- “ Leakages [...] are not exploitable via leakage-abuse attacks in practice ”

## Attacks & Countermeasures



- “ Severe threat ”
- “ Devastating results ”
- “ [ESAs] are extremely vulnerable to [attacks] ”
- “ [ESA] schemes should no longer be used without countermeasures ”
- “ Our assumptions on background information are weak ”
- “ With some prior knowledge [...] an honest-but-curious server can recover the underlying keywords ”

# Uncertainty Of Security



## Constructions

## Attacks & Countermeasures



“

Benign leakage

”

“

Standard leakage

”

“

[Attacks] assume extremely strong models

“

Leakages [...] are not exploitable  
abuse attacks in practice

“

Con

“

Acc

”



”

Threat

“

Devastating results

”

“

[ESAs] are extremely  
vulnerable to  
[attacks]

”

“

[ESA] schemes  
should no longer be  
used without  
countermeasures

”

“

Our assumptions on background information are weak

”

“

some prior knowledge [...] an honest-but-server can recover the underlying keywords

”

## **A Realistic Assessment** of Leakage Attacks on Encrypted Search

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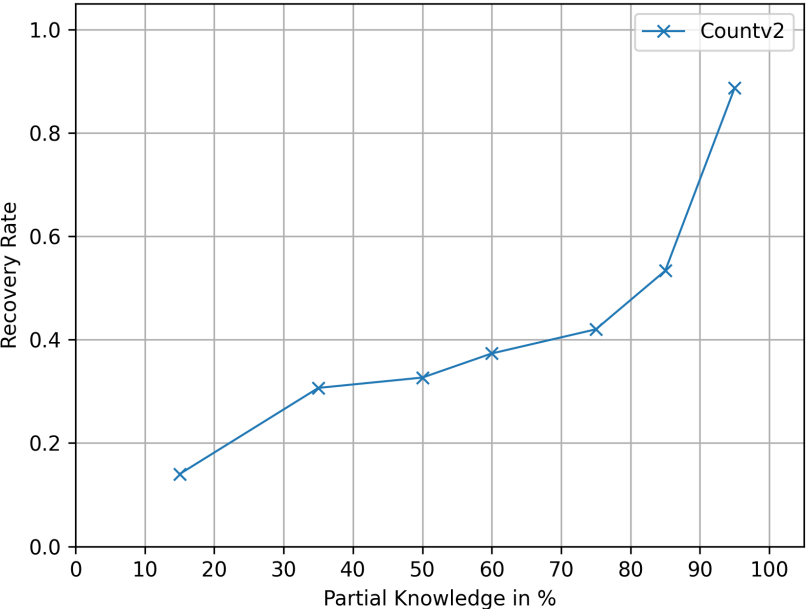
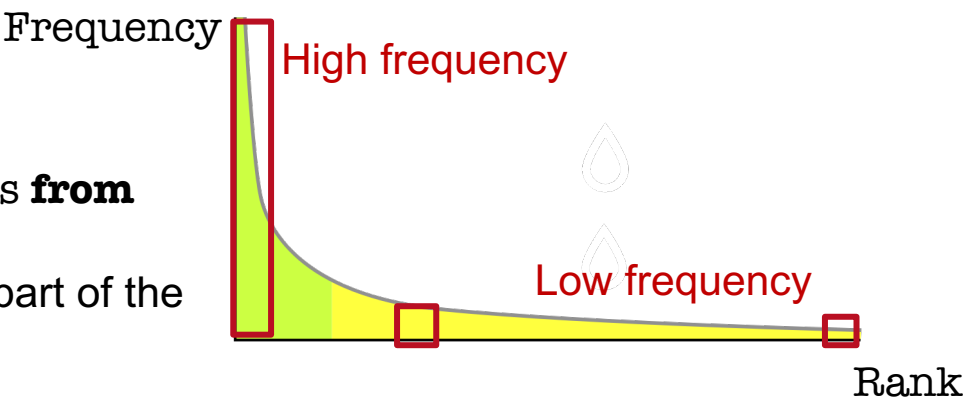
# Previous Evaluations

Usual evaluations for **Keyword attacks**:

1. Enron (& Apache)  
email data collection

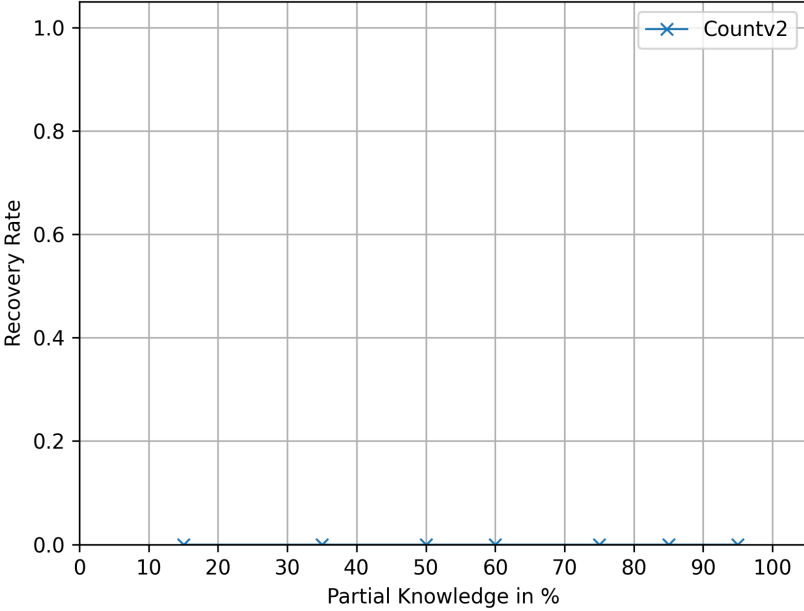
2. Restrict data to 500-  
3000 keywords

3. Draw 150 queries **from**  
**data collection**  
→ ??? From which part of the  
distribution ?
4. Evaluate on  
**partial knowledge**



High frequency

or



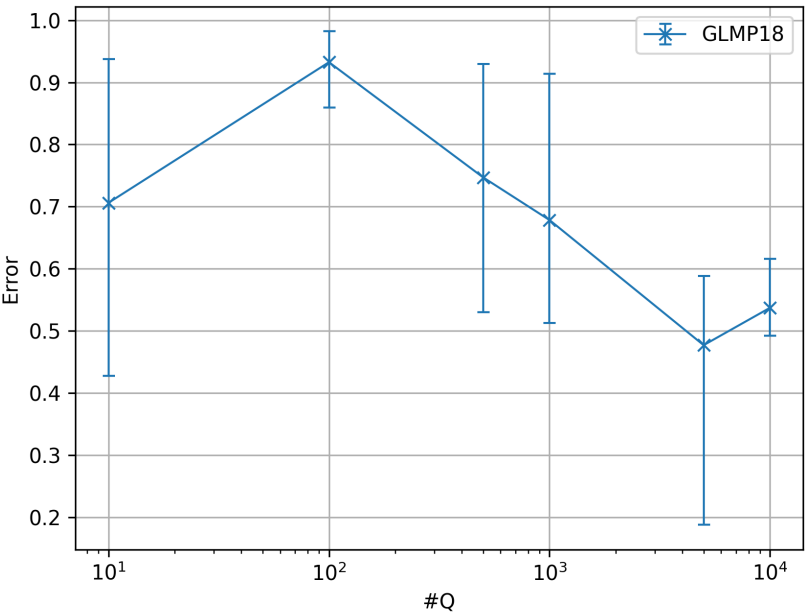
Low frequency



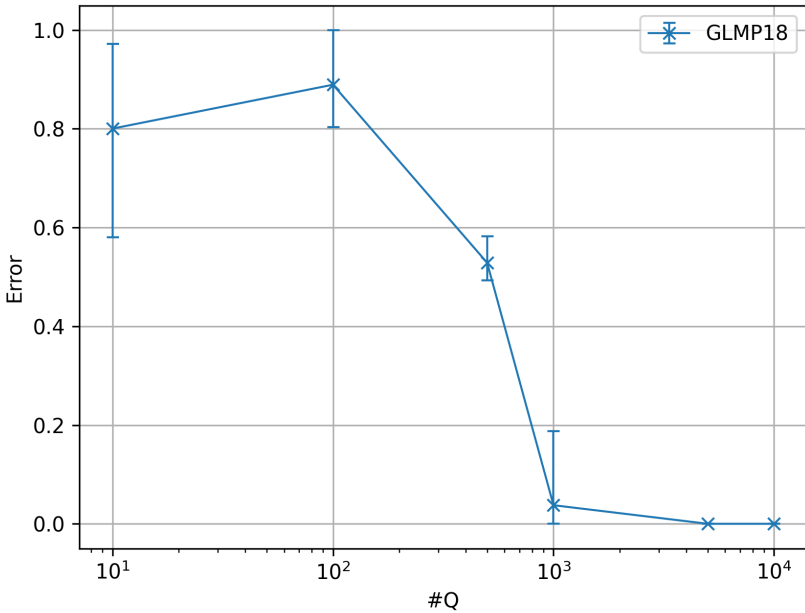
# Previous Evaluations

Usual evaluations for **Range attacks**:

1. Subset of HCUP Data collection
2. Pick Artificial query distribution (Uniform/Zipf/...)
3. Evaluate for different amounts of queries




or




# Limitations & Contributions


Limitations




Systematization  
Lacking



Single Use Case

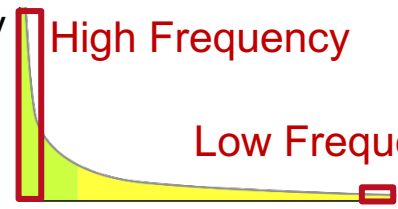


Few Comparisons



Closed-Source Code

Frequency




High Frequency

Low Frequency


Rank

Artificial Queries


Our Contributions




Survey of ESA  
Cryptanalysis



New Attacks  
New Data



Systematic Re-  
Evaluation

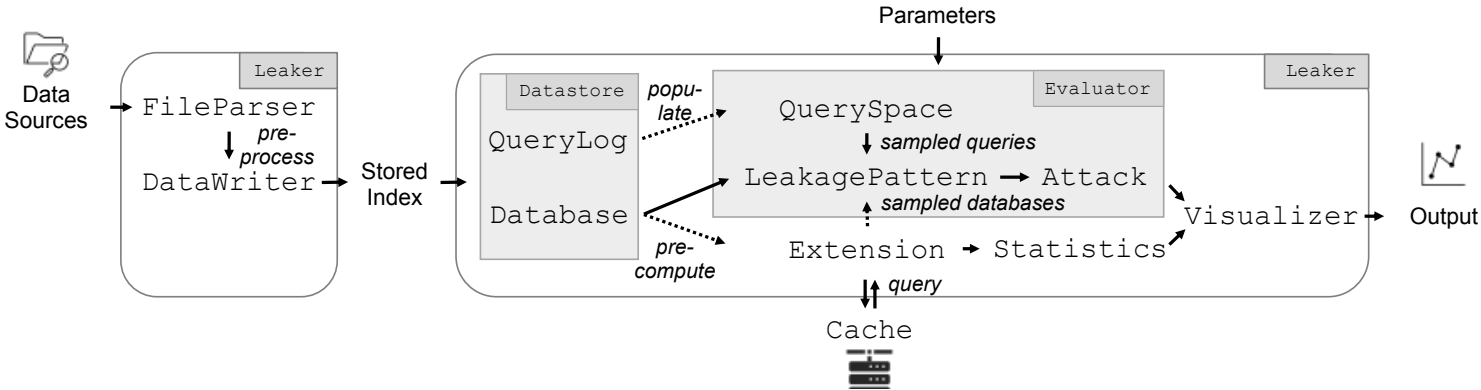
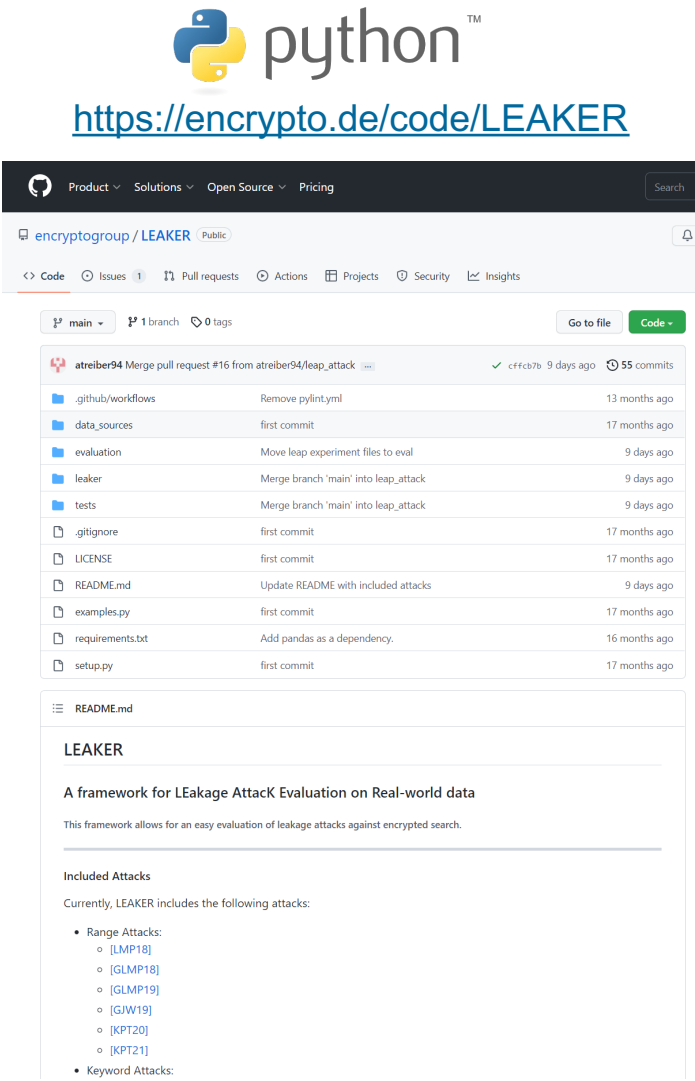


Open-Source  
Framework

```
User,Query
216,'Aarhus'
216,'University'
106,'Visit'
216,'Cryptanalysis'
```

First Real-World Query Logs

# LEAKER Framework



- Re-Implementation of major attacks in open-source Framework

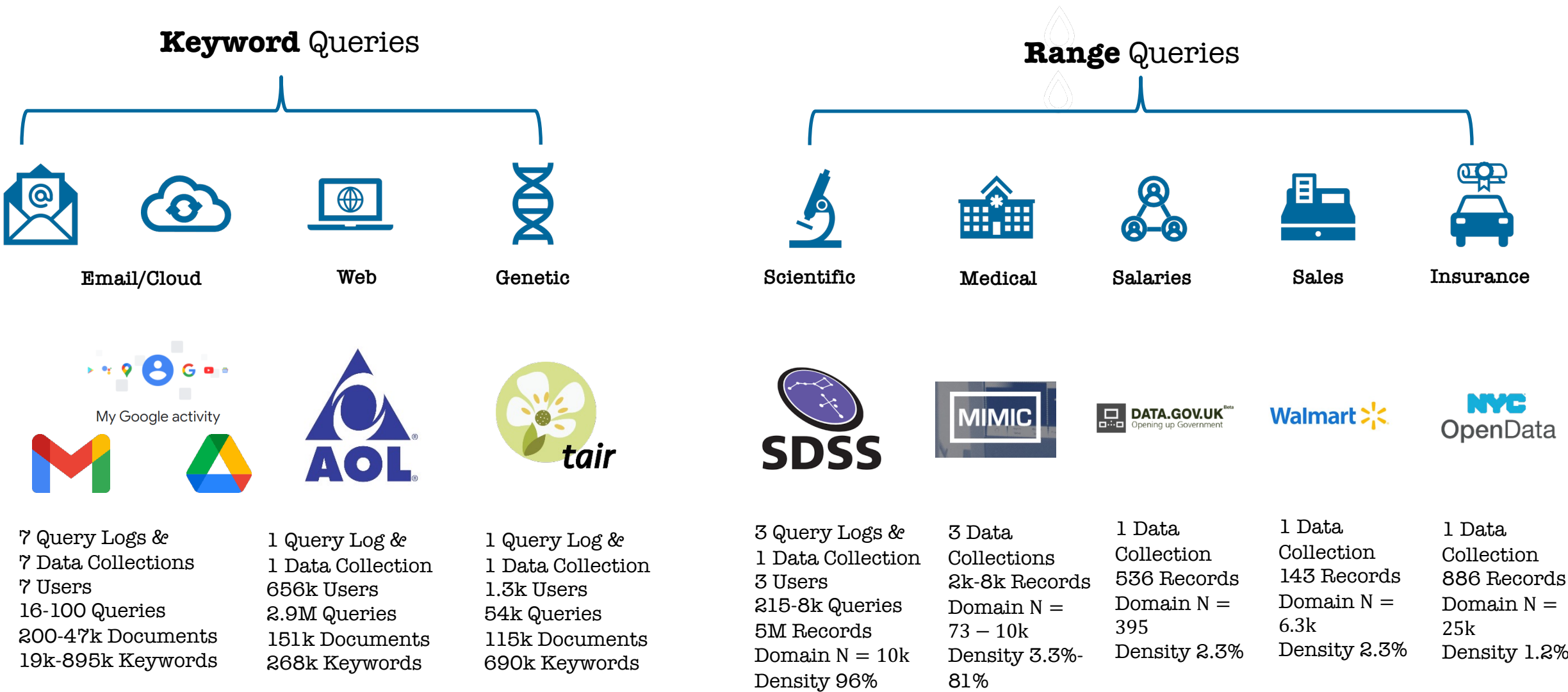
On Release: [ IKK12, CGPR15, LMP18, GLMP18, GLMP19, GJW19, BKM20, KPT20, KPT21, RPH21 ]

Since then: [KPT19, FMA+20, NHP+21, Sie22]

In development: [OK21, DHP21, OK22, ???]

- Modular design & supports interoperability
- Easy to implement new attacks & Countermeasures
- Easy to pre-process & use new data types.

# Data Sources



# Evaluation Summary

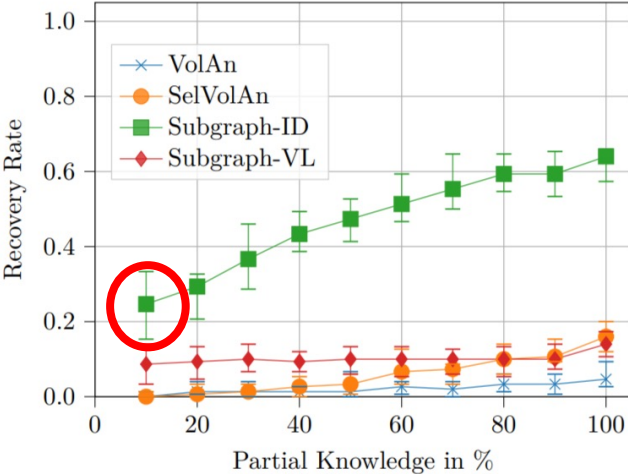
[BKM20]

None of the attacks worked against low-  
[frequency] keywords

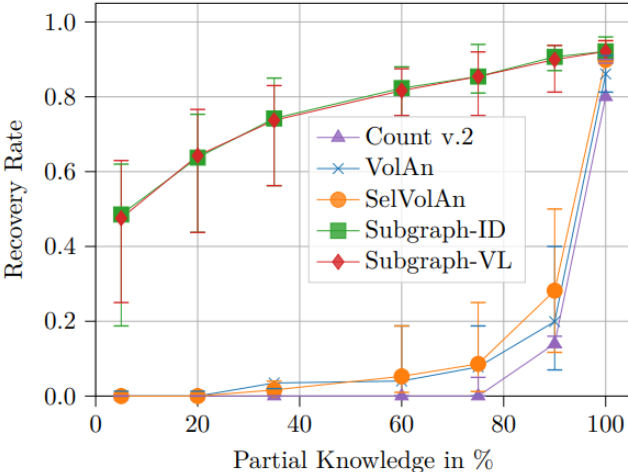
[RPH21]

Users are more likely to **search for a  
specific email**

[BKM20] L. Blackstone, S. Kamara, T. Moataz. Revisiting leakage abuse attacks. NDSS'20  
[RPH21] R.G. Roessink, A. Peter, F. Hahn. Experimental review of the IKK query recovery attack: Assumptions, recovery rate and improvements. ACNS'21






(Lowest) Mean  
Frequency:  
1.54!  
(On the TAIR  
Dataset)



Mean  
Frequency:  
326!  
(On the Gmail  
Datasets)

# Evaluation Summary (Keyword Search)

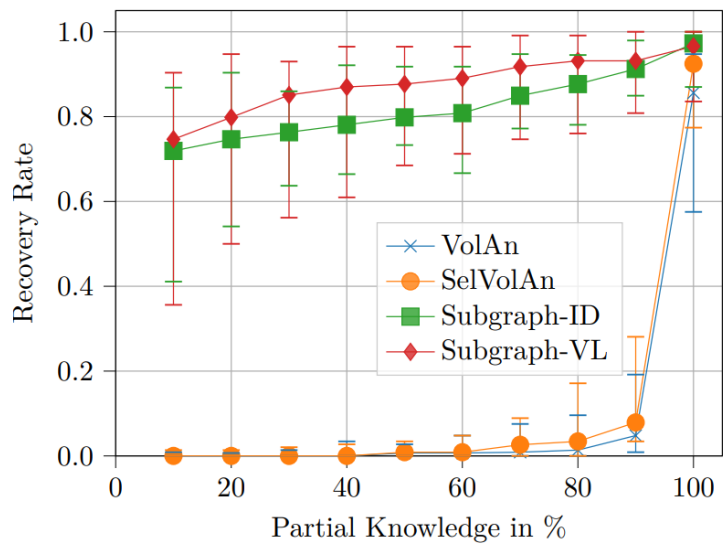
(subjective)

Attacks	Leakage 	Success Cases 	Risk 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>VolAn [BKM20]</li><li>SelVolAn [BKM20]</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Response length</li><li>Response volume</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>High adversarial knowledge</li></ul>	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>[IKK12]</li><li>Count V.2 [CGPR15]</li><li>DetIKK [RPH21]</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Co-occurrence</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>High adversarial knowledge</li></ul>	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>SubgraphID [BKM20]</li><li>SubgraphVL [BKM20]</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Response identities</li><li>Response volumes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Low adversarial knowledge</li></ul>	High

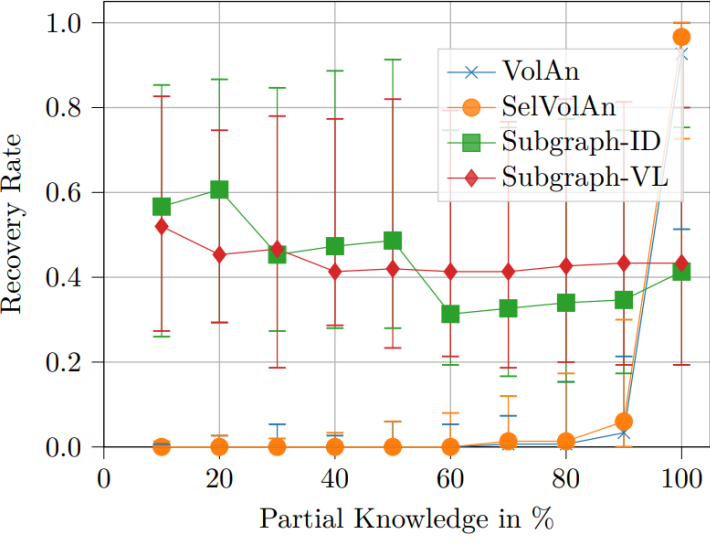
=> Suppression of identifier and volume leakage of responses necessary!

# Evaluation Summary (Keyword Search)

AOL  
single user & low frequency

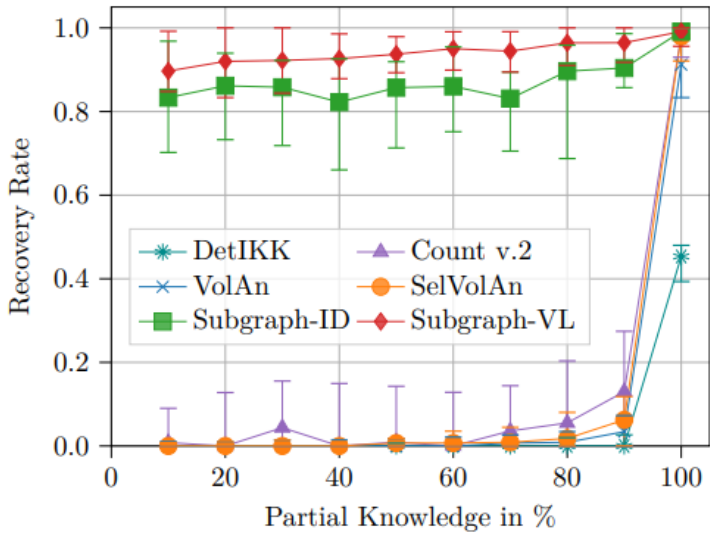


including queries outside of partial knowledge



with repeating queries

AOL  
single user & high frequency



# Evaluation Summary (Range Search)

(subjective)

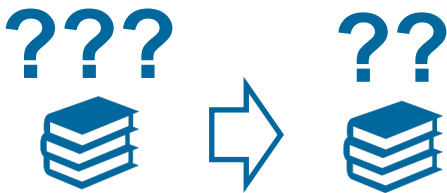
Attacks	Leakage	Success Cases	Risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• [GLMP18]</li><li>• [GJW19]</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response length</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• None</li></ul>	Very low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• APA [KPT21]</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response length</li><li>• Query equality</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evenly distributed data</li></ul>	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• [LMP18]</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response identities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dense</li></ul>	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GenKNNO [GLMP19]</li><li>• ApprValue [GLMP19]</li><li>• ARR [KPT20] + ApprOrder [GLMP19]</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response identities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Large widths</li><li>• Skewed values</li></ul>	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ARR [KPT20]</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Response identities</li><li>• Order</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most cases</li></ul>	High

=> Research on order reconstruction + Leakage suppression for range case!



# Nuanced highlights given LEAKER

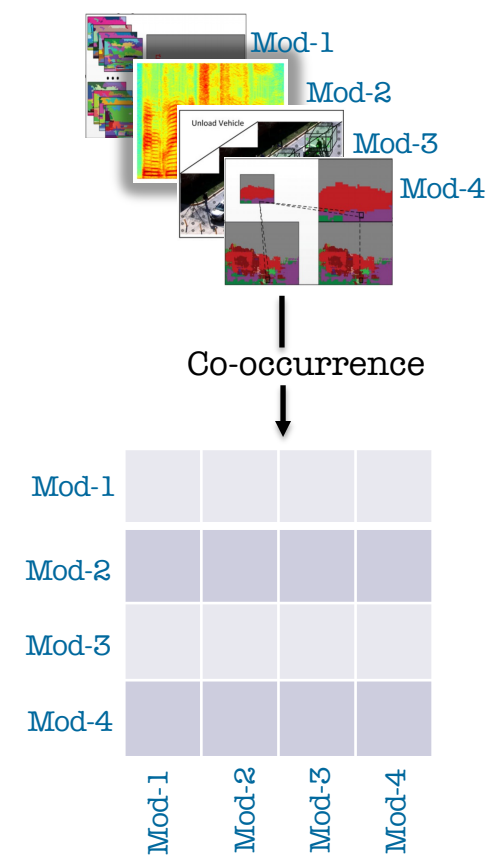
[BKM20] attacks on identifier or volume leakage work much better than previously anticipated
[IKK12,CGPR15] keyword attacks perform much worse than previously anticipated
Range attacks rarely work on our data and success highly depends on query/data distributions
[OK22] attacks recovery rate given a specific leakage profile highly depends on prior assumption over query/data
ESA cryptanalysis is very nuanced



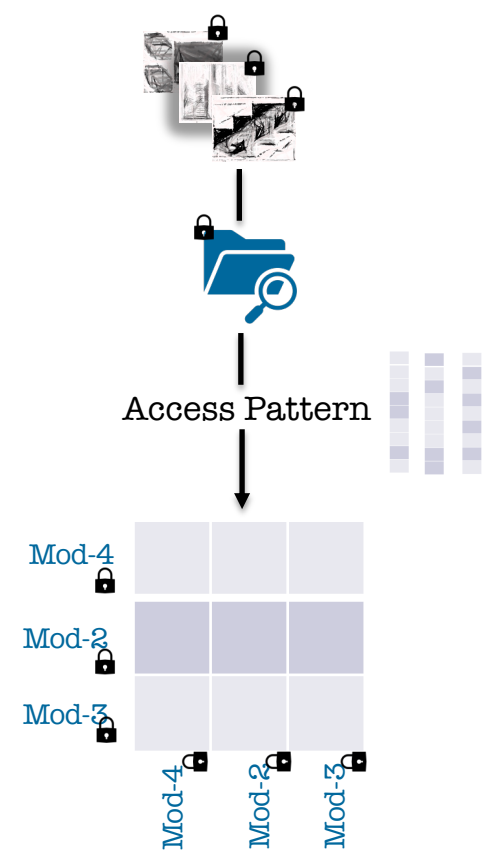
[BKM20] L. Blackstone, S. Kamara, T. Moataz. Revisiting leakage abuse attacks. NDSS’20  
[IKK12] M. S. Islam, M. Kuzu, M. Kantarcioglu. Access pattern disclosure on searchable encryption: Ramification, attack and mitigation. NDSS’12  
[CGPR15] D. Cash, P. Grubbs, J. Perry, T. Ristenpart. Leakage-abuse attacks against searchable encryption. CCS’15  
[OK22] S. Oya and F. Kerschbaum. IHOP: Improved Statistical Query Recovery against Searchable Symmetric Encryption through Quadratic Optimization. USENIX’22

# Statistical query recovery attacks

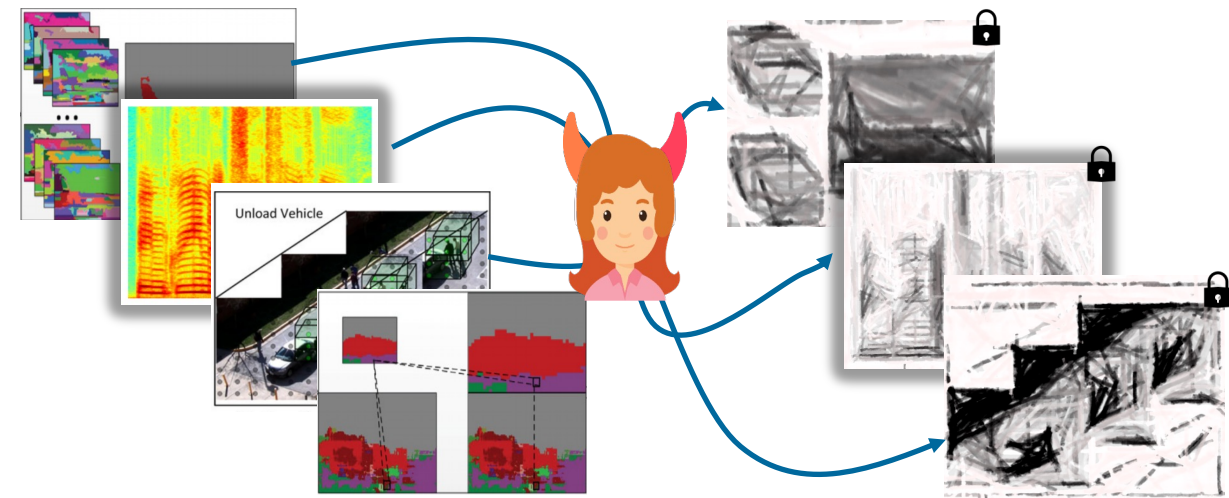
## ↔ Auxiliary Information



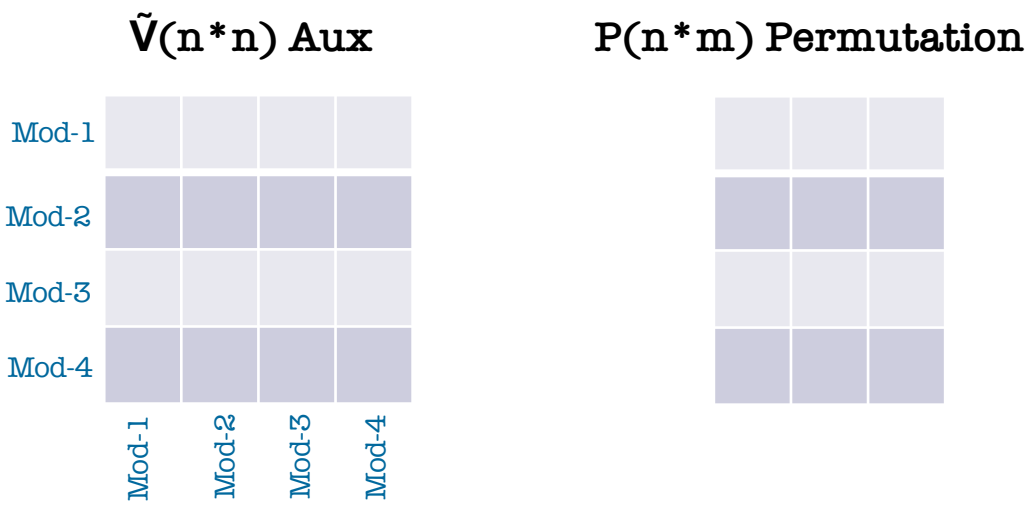
## Observations ↔



Statistical-based query recovery attacks achieve [lower] accuracy and are [not] considered a serious threat. [OK22]



# Statistical query recovery attacks



The query recovery is formulated as a quadratic assignment problem and iteratively solved via linear assignments.

[OK22]

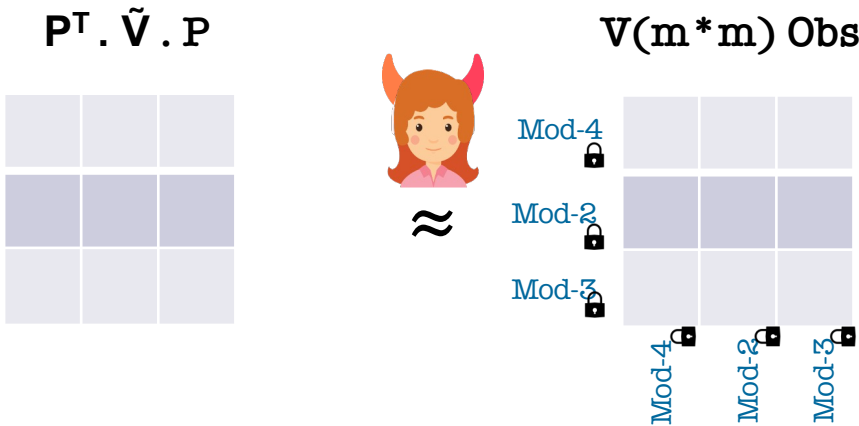
$$P = \arg \min_{P \in \mathcal{P}} \sum_{i,i' \in [n]} \sum_{j,j' \in [m]} c_{i,i',j,j'} \cdot P_{i,j} \cdot P_{i',j'}$$

Q.A.P

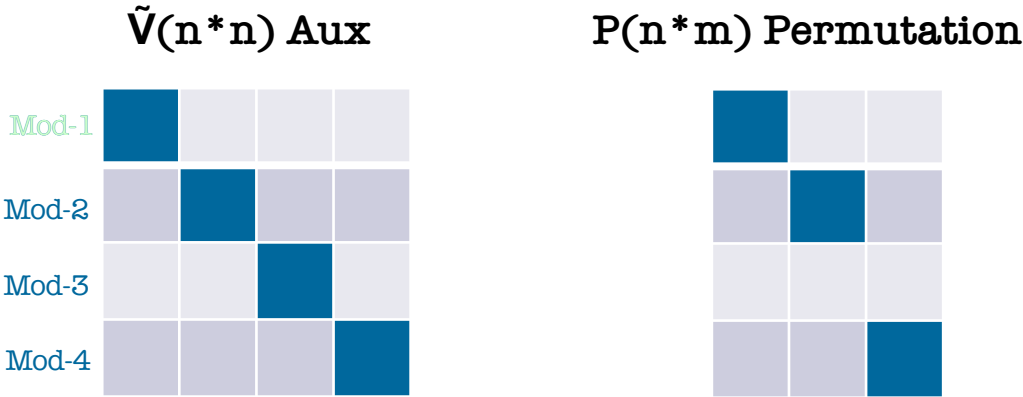
Examples:

- IKK :  $P = \operatorname{argmin} || \tilde{V} - P^T \cdot \tilde{V} \cdot P ||_2$   
--> simulated annealing
- graphM :  $P = \operatorname{argmin} || \tilde{V} - P^T \cdot \tilde{V} \cdot P ||_2^2 - \operatorname{tr}(CP)$   
--> convex-concave rel.

[IKK] Islam et .al. Access pattern disclosure on searchable encryption: ramifications, attacks and mitigation. NDSS12.  
[graphM] Pouliot and wright. The shadow nemesis: inference attacks on efficiently deployable, efficiently searchable encryption. CCS16.



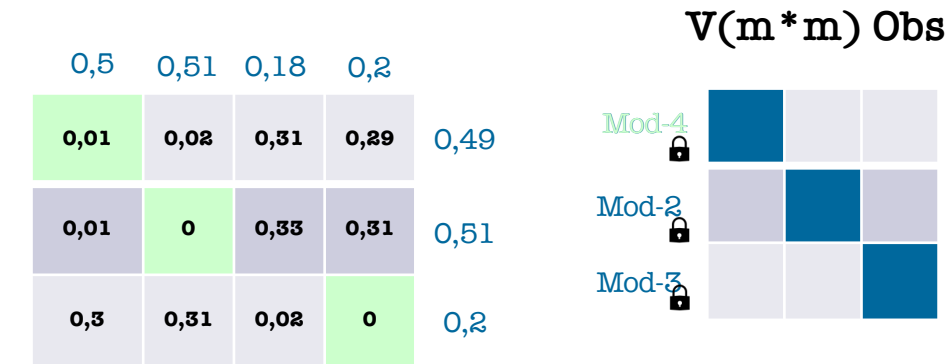
# Statistical query recovery attacks



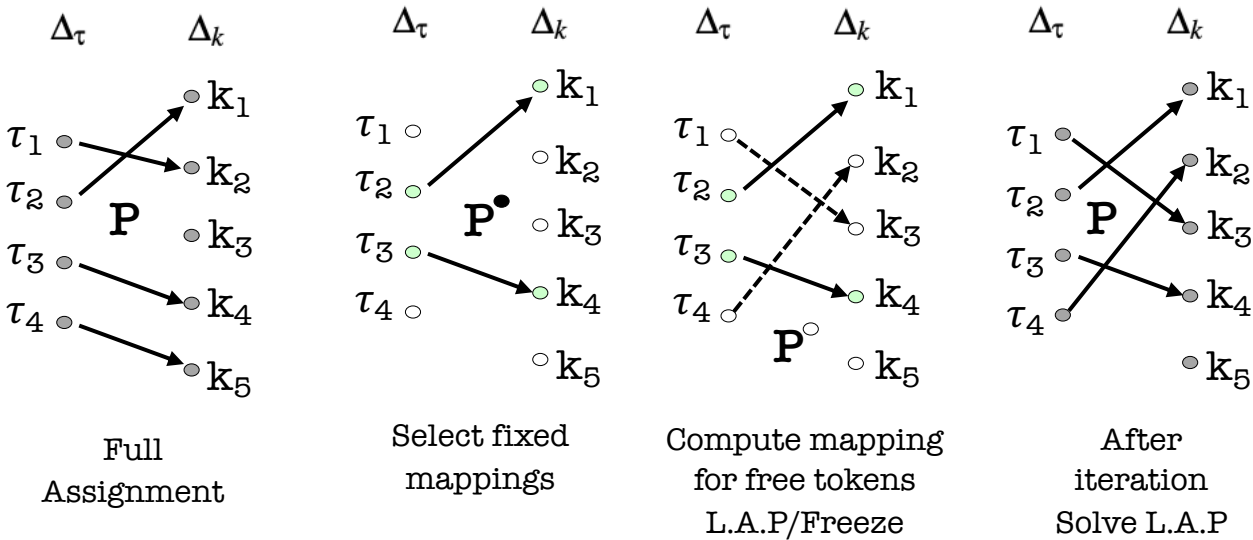
$$P = \arg \min_{P \in \mathcal{P}} \sum_{i \in [n]} \sum_{j \in [m]} c_{i,j} \cdot P_{i,j}.$$

L.A.P

This very efficient, but a lot of information is wasted because of not using the off-diagonal terms.



Hungarian algorithm

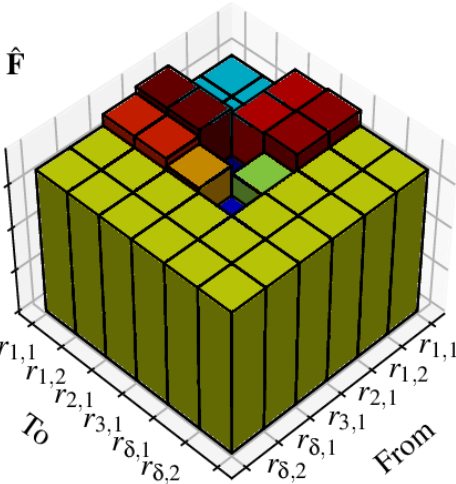
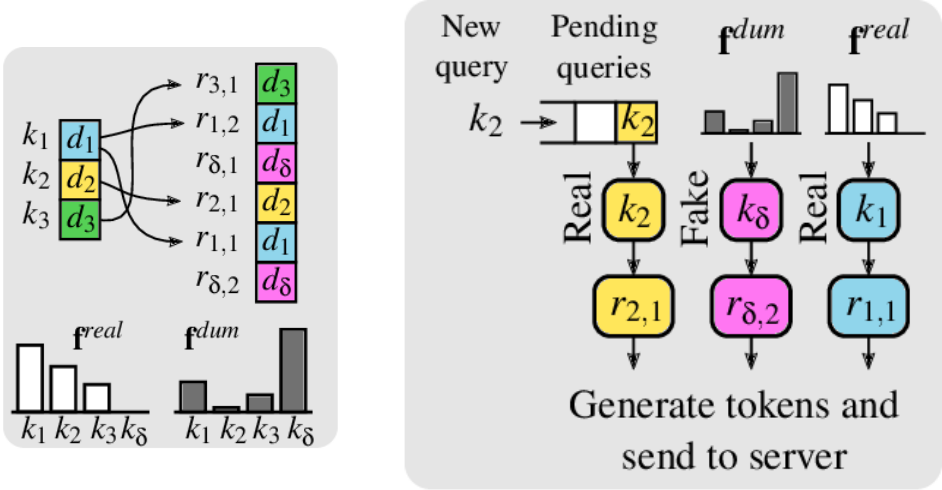
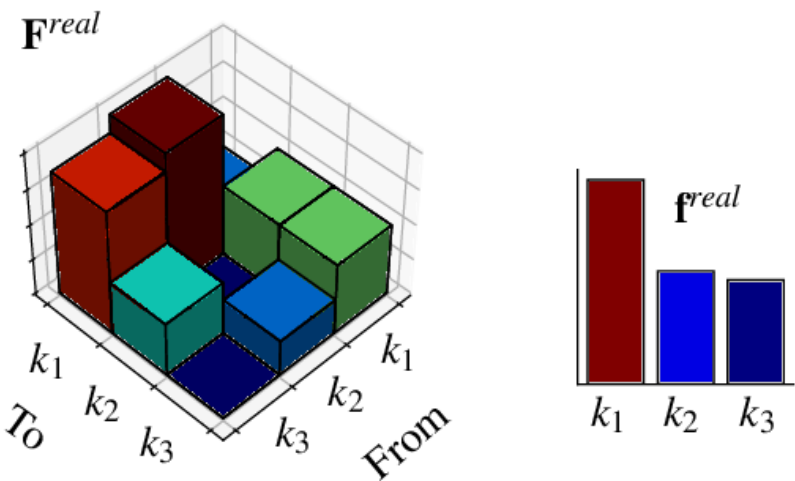
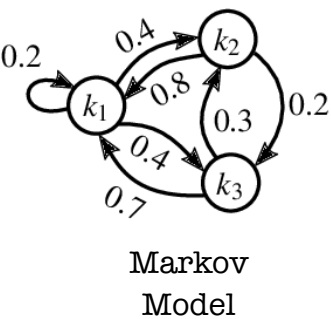


$\Delta_\tau^\circ = \{\tau_1, \tau_4\}$     $\Delta_\tau^\bullet = \{\tau_2, \tau_3\}$     $\Delta_k^\circ = \{k_2, k_3, k_5\}$     $\Delta_k^\bullet = \{k_1, k_4\}$

# Statistical query recovery attacks

Adversary can exploit Qeq in the **dependent** setting where the client's queries are correlated, even when access obfuscation defenses are applied.

[OK22]



# Statistical query recovery attacks



Step 1 :

- Initializes an empty mapping

Step 2 :

- Computes the stationary distribution  $\pi$ ,

Step 3 :

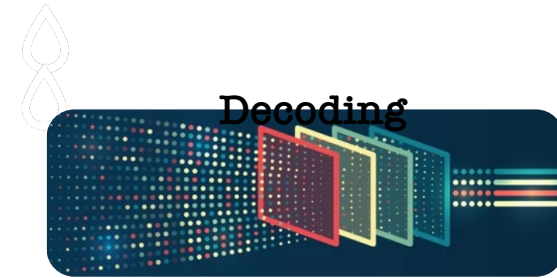
- Calculate the histogram of the sequence of queries  $v$ .
  - $\approx$  to the average number of visits over the M.C states)

Step 4 :

- Map the closest value in  $\pi$  to  $v_i$ , for all  $i \in [t]$ ;
  - the average number of visits to the  $i^{\text{th}}$  state is approximately equal to the  $i^{\text{th}}$  component of the stationary distribution  $\pi$ .

Step 5:

- output the mapping and the error score
  - Error: the total distance between the avg.# visits and the selected component of the stationary distribution



Step 1 :

- Initializes an empty mapping

Step 2 :

- Computes the Observation matrix of HMM  $O=(o_{i,j}) \ i \in [m], j \in [\#I]$ ,
  - The frequency  $f_j$  of each unique query  $j \in [\#I]$ , is first calculated using query equality leakage.
  - Set  $o_{i,j}$  to  $1-|f_j-\pi_i|$  i.f.f  $|f_j-\pi_i|_1 < \epsilon$ , error parameter.
  - Normalize  $O$ , s.t the sum of each row is equal to 1.

Step 3:

- Compute transition matrix  $P^A$  and a uniform initial distribution  $\mu$  to form HMM parameters  $\Theta:=(P^A,O,\mu)$ .

Step 4:

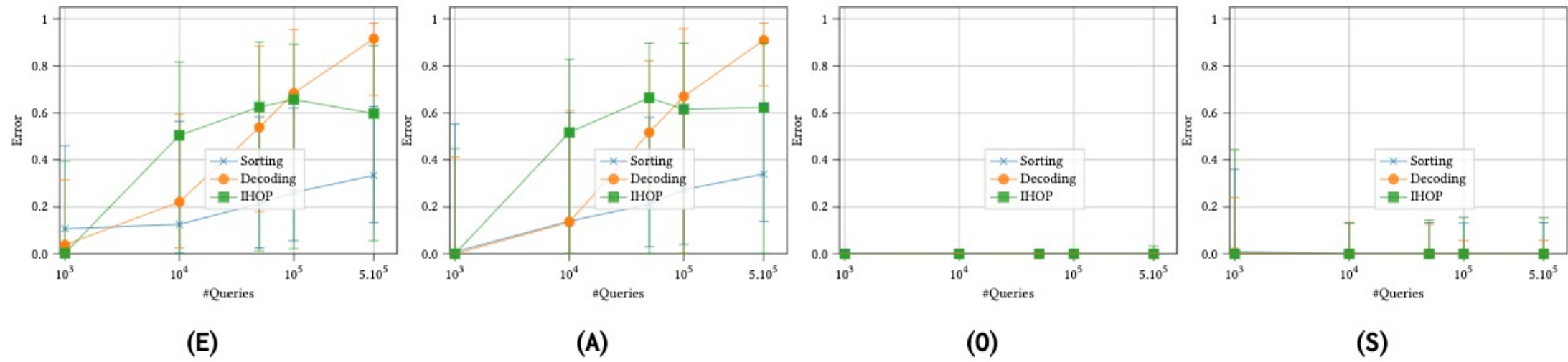
- (Mapping  $\alpha$  the attacked query sequence to the state identifiers of unique queries via the equality leakage, the likelihood  $s$  of this mapping given the observation )  $\leftarrow \text{viterbi}$  .
  - Generate a sequence of observed states that matches the set of observation states of the created HMM parameters

Step 5 :

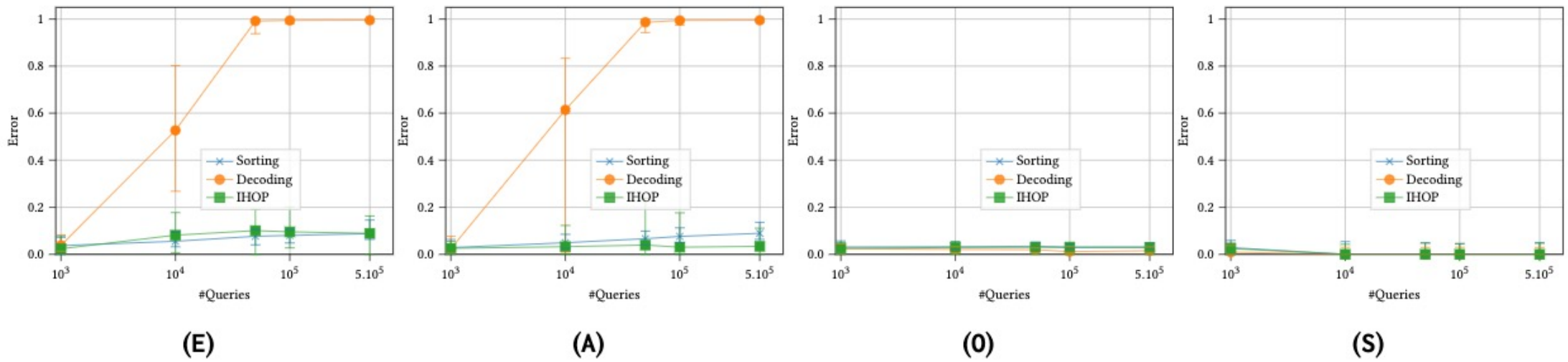
- A new map  $\alpha'$  translates the states  $\alpha$  maps to actual keywords using the adversary's knowledge.
  - error parameter, we set  $s'=1-s$  such that the result with the maximum likelihood will correspond to the lowest score.



Evaluation results (R.W Q-log )



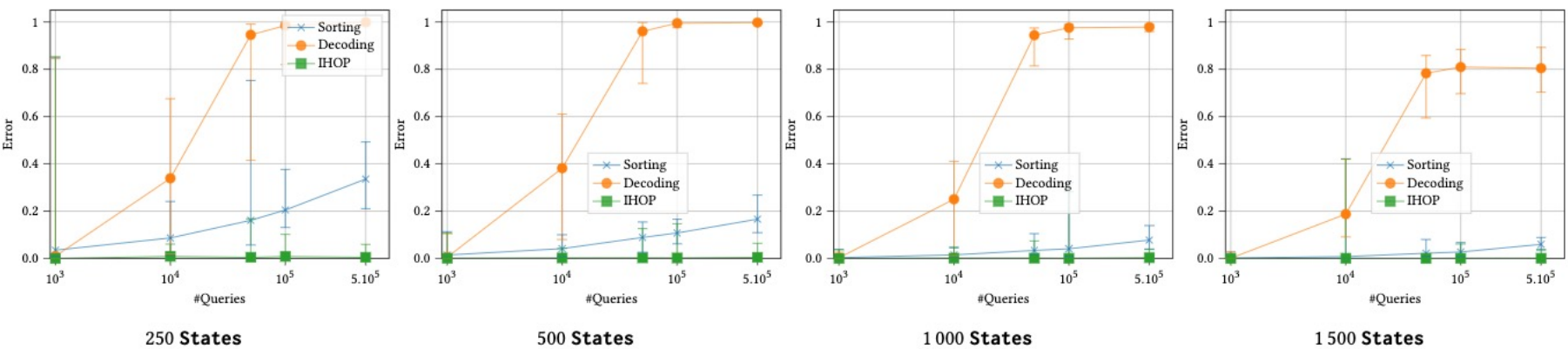
Evaluation for each of 5 users on AOL



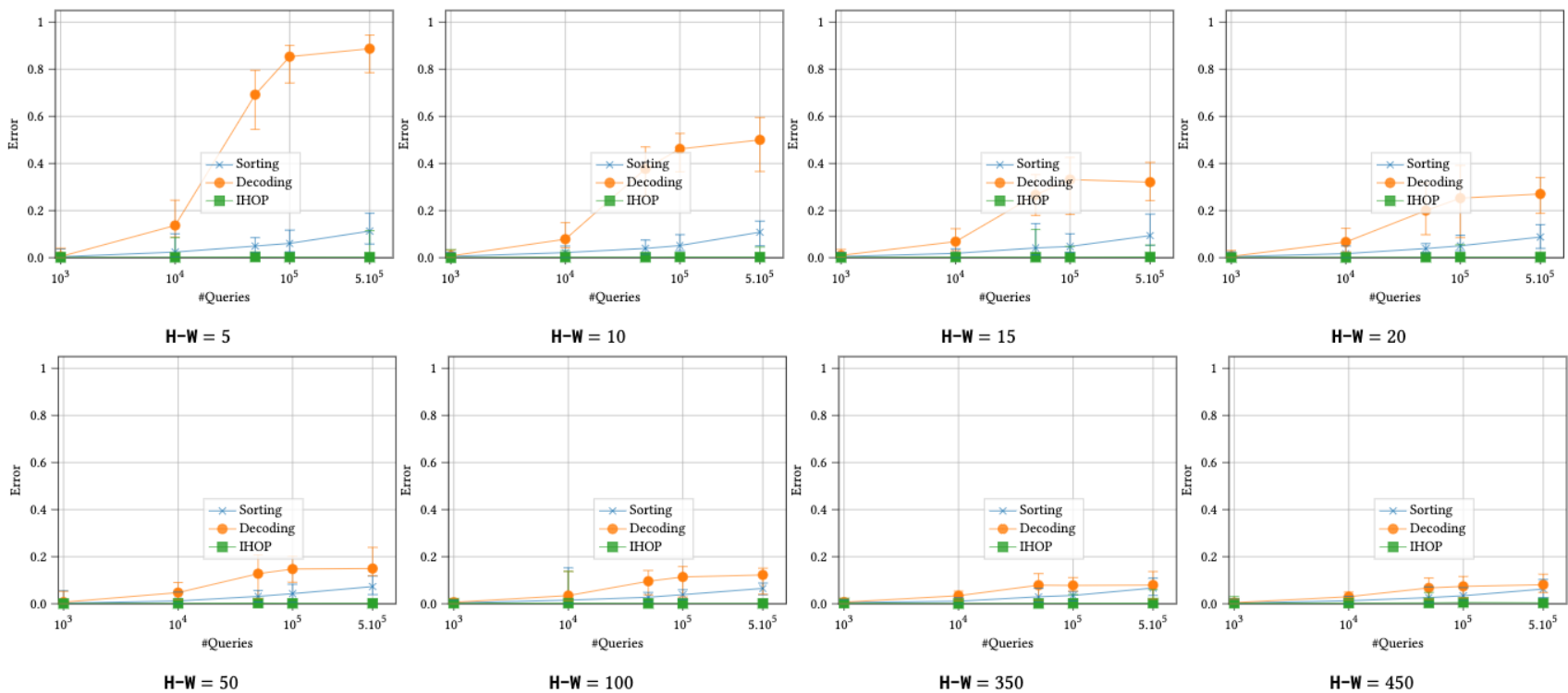
Evaluation for each of 5 users on TAIR

# Evaluation results (Art.Distributions)

Evaluation for Zipf-Zipf Artificial distribution with fixed H-W



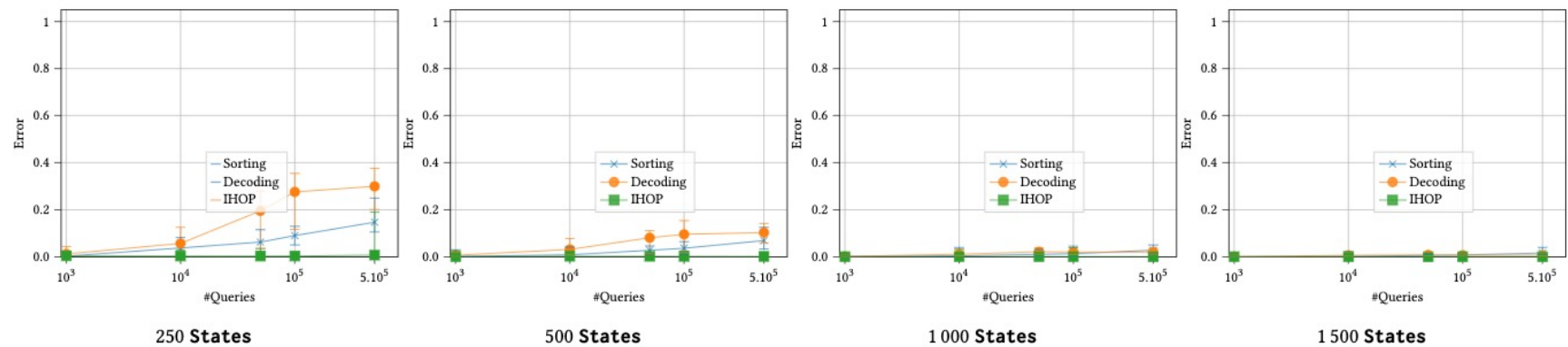
Evaluation for Zipf-Zipf Artificial distribution with variable H-W



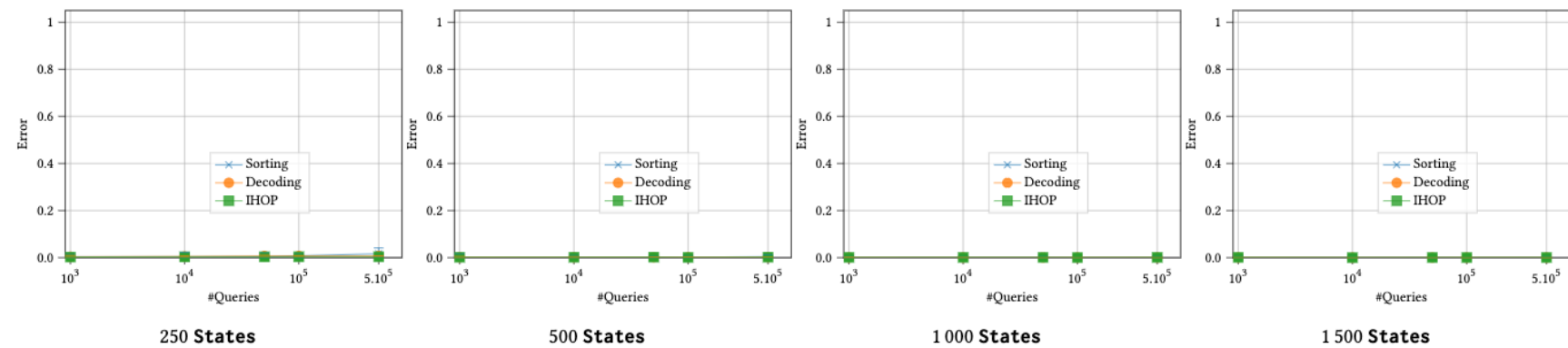


# Evaluation results (Art.Distributions )

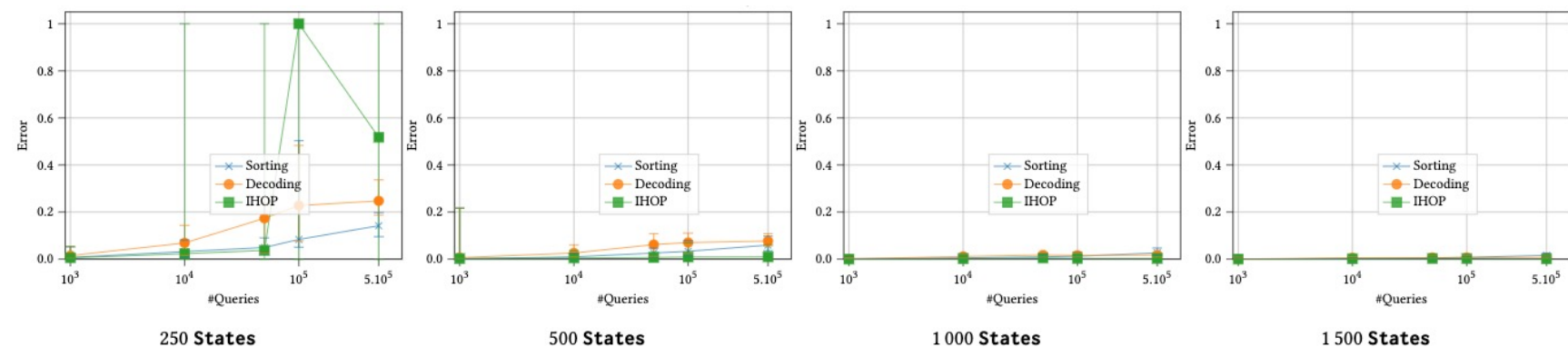
Evaluation for *Erdos* Artificial Distribution.



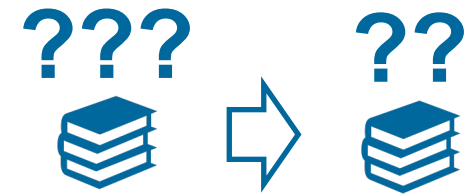
Evaluation for *Uniform* Artificial distribution.



Evaluation for *Zipf* Artificial distribution.



No More  
**BORING**  
Presentations



**Thank you  
for your attention**

# Cryptanalysis Strikes Back A Realistic assessment of leakage attacks on Encrypted Search

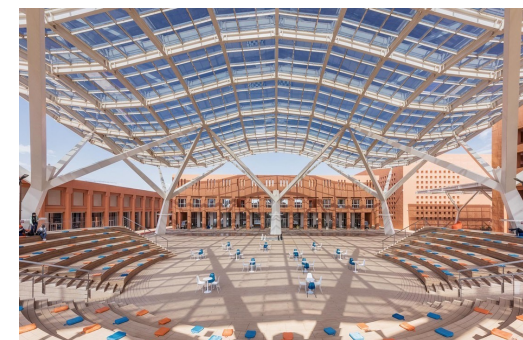
**Abdelkarim Kati**<sup>†‡</sup>

together with T. Moataz, S. Kamara and A. Treiber.

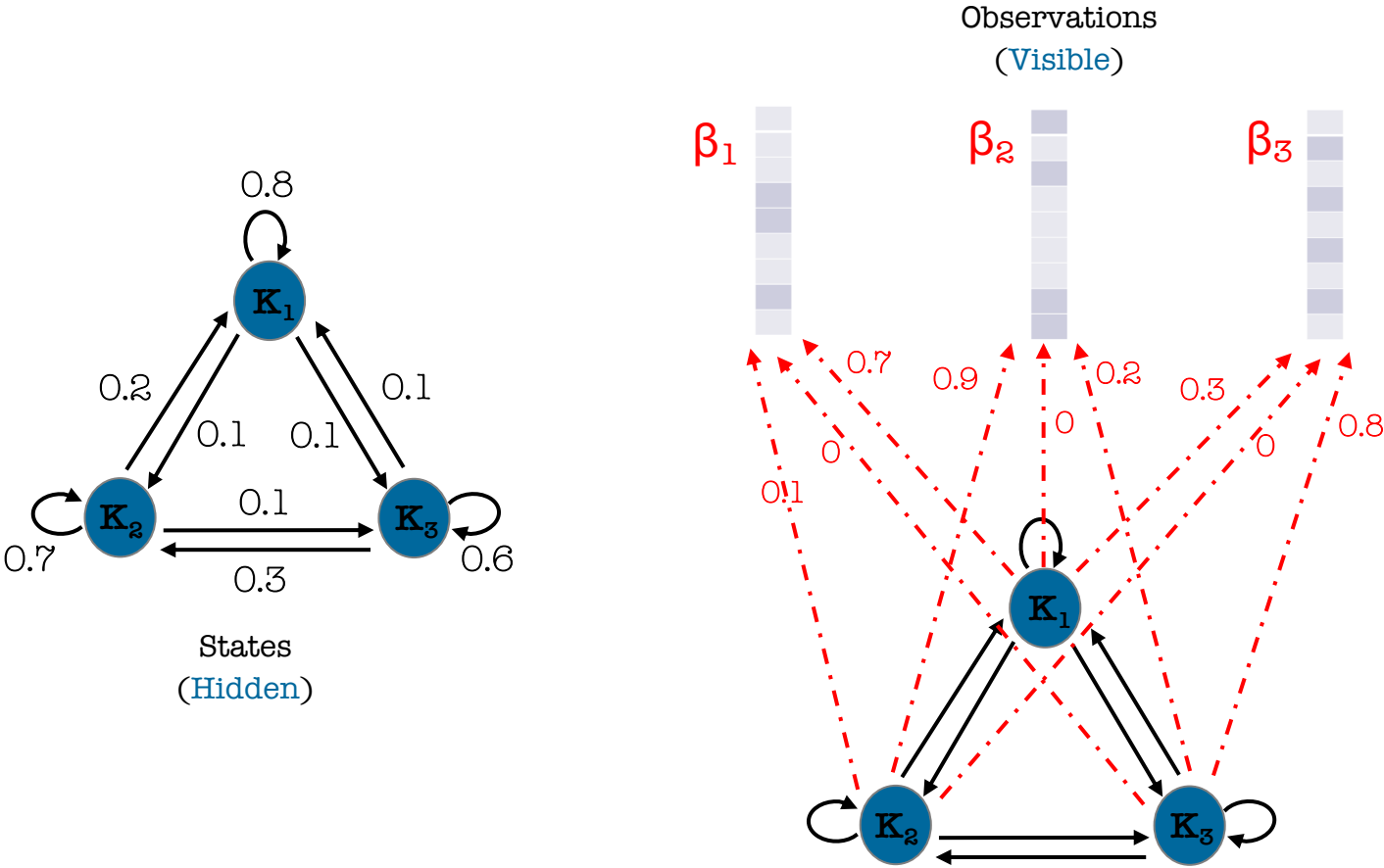
<sup>†</sup>School of Computer Science,  
Mohammed VI Polytechnic University.

<sup>‡</sup>Encrypted Systems Lab, Brown University.

January 24, 2023 at Aarhus University.



# Viterbi Algorithm (Uncovering Problem)



	K <sub>1</sub>	K <sub>2</sub>	K <sub>3</sub>	
K <sub>1</sub>	0.8	0.1	0.1	State transition probabilities
K <sub>2</sub>	0.2	0.7	0.1	
K <sub>3</sub>	0.1	0.3	0.6	

	K <sub>1</sub>	K <sub>2</sub>	K <sub>3</sub>	
	0.6	0.2	0.2	Initial state probabilities

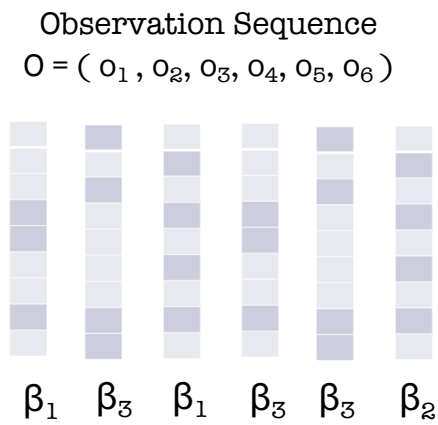
  

	$\beta_1$	$\beta_2$	$\beta_3$	
K <sub>1</sub>	0.7	0	0.3	Emission probabilities
K <sub>2</sub>	0.1	0.9	0	
K <sub>3</sub>	0	0.2	0.8	

\* MAPLE: Markov Process Leakage attacks on Encrypted search ([under submission](#))

# Viterbi Algorithm (Uncovering Problem)

Input



Viterbi

	$o_1=\beta_1$	$o_2=\beta_3$	$o_3=\beta_1$	$o_4=\beta_3$	$o_5=\beta_3$	$o_6=\beta_2$
$K_1$	0.4200	0.1008	0.0564	0.0135	0.0033	0
$K_2$	0.200	0	0.0010	0	0	0.0006
$K_3$	0	0.0336	0	0.0045	0.0022	0.0003

Accumulated probability matrix

	$o_1=\beta_1$	$o_2=\beta_3$	$o_3=\beta_1$	$o_4=\beta_3$	$o_5=\beta_3$
$K_1$	1	1	1	1	1
$K_2$	1	1	1	1	3
$K_3$	1	3	1	3	3

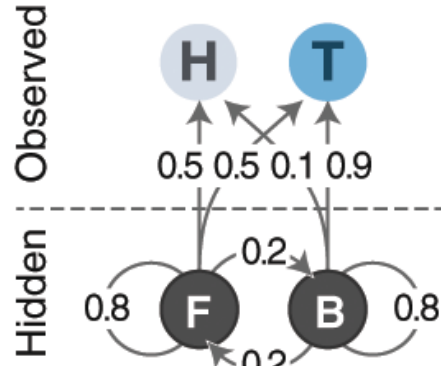
$I_6 = 2$

Backtracking matrix

Output

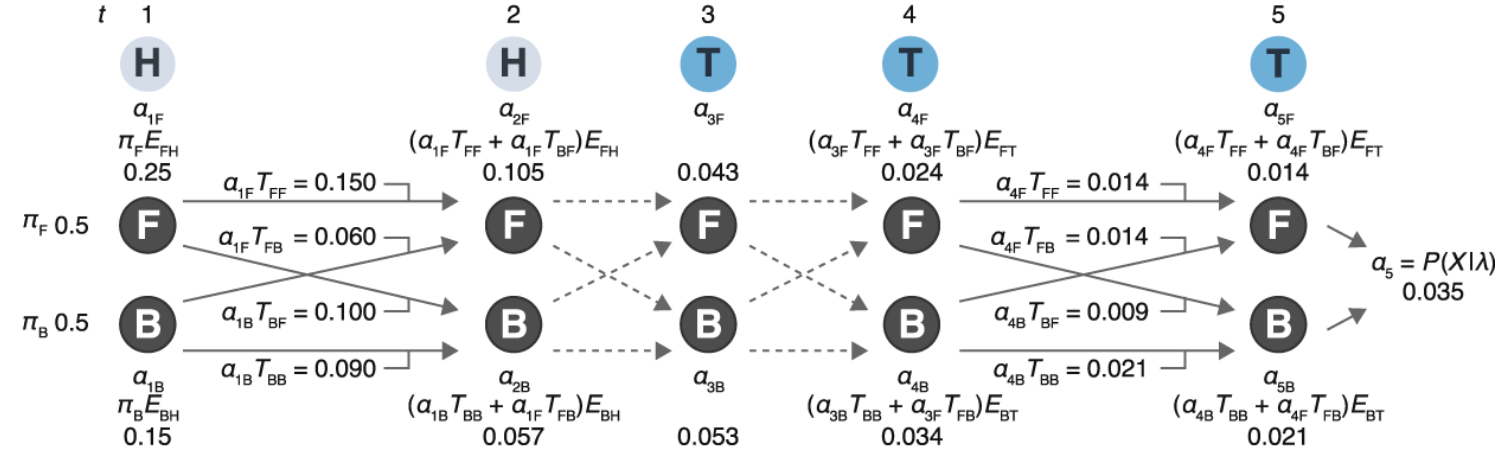
Observation Sequence  
 $S^* = (K_1, K_1, K_1, K_3, K_3, K_2)$

# Baum-Welch Algorithm (Estimation Problem)



Hidden Markov Model  
of an unstable coin

## Forward probability



## Backward probability

Ground truth

$$E = \begin{matrix} & H & T \\ F & 0.5 & 0.5 \\ B & 0.1 & 0.9 \end{matrix}$$

$$T = \begin{matrix} & F & B \\ F & 0.8 & 0.2 \\ B & 0.2 & 0.8 \end{matrix}$$

Initial estimates

$$\hat{E}_0 = \begin{matrix} & H & T \\ F & 0.5 & 0.5 \\ B & 0.3 & 0.7 \end{matrix}$$

$$\hat{T}_0 = \begin{matrix} & F & B \\ F & 0.6 & 0.4 \\ B & 0.4 & 0.6 \end{matrix}$$

HMM true parameters  
And initial estimations

