

# An Extended Re-selling Protocol For Existing Anti-Counterfeiting Schemes

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## Abstract

Product counterfeiting is a continues problem in industry, Recently an anti-counterfeiting protocol to address this issue via radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology was proposed by researchers. Yet the use case of re-selling the same product was not been fully addressed which might cause serious problem for the exciting and proposed schemes and transactions. This paper proposes an extended RFID-based anti-counterfeiting to address the use case of the original buyer reselling the same item to a second buyer. We will follow the proposed extended scheme with a formal security analysis to prove that the proposed protocol is secure and immune against must known security attacks.

*Keywords:* Anti-counterfeiting, RFID, Protocol, Re-selling

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## 1. Introduction

*RFID*. tag counterfeiting can be described as the replication of a tag by either cloning its hardware component or copying its software in a way that the genuine reader or users would not be able to tell the if this tag is genuine or replicated one.[1] A number of researchers have proposed methods to address these problems, including track and trace methods and physically unclonable function (PUF)-based methods; however, the existing methods do not provide a sufficiently integrated solution to address the counterfeiting problem in a retail environment. Many researcher address RFID based product anti-counterfeiting by proposing protocols or schemes to address this issue such as [2], [3] and [4]. The work in [5] is the most recent and secure since the researchers apply the

frame work to a formal security analysis based on strand space. Yet, their work did not cover the high possibility of the same product or item been re-soled again by the buyer. This non mentioned transaction will definitely cause confusion and might effect the usability of the framework mentioned above. In this  
15 paper, we propose an extended version of the novel RFID-based scheme for anti-counterfeiting in large-scale retail environments proposed in [5], which suppose to detect counterfeit and stolen items. The extended version proposed here will cover use case which was not covered by the above mentioned research that can  
20 cause confusion and error for the transactions while reselling the product.

*In.* the next section we will discuss the related work in the literature that address goods counterfeiting before we continue to analyse Ghaith et al protocol, then propose an extended anti-counterfeiting re-selling scheme in section III and later apply a formal security analysis based on strand space in section IV to  
25 prove that our scheme is secure, correct and resistance to attacks. Section V concludes the work.

## 2. Literature Review

In this section we will first mention some of the related work for Anti-counterfeiting before analysing ghaith et al and other related schemes which  
30 were designed to address products and items counterfeiting in retailer systems and merchandise.

### 2.1. Related Work

Counterfeiting goods or products is an ongoing problem which cost lot of losses in the global market. The losses are estimated between USD\$200 billion and USD\$250 billion every year [6],[7] and [8]. Other than the losses in life's and  
35 injuries caused by fake medicines [9], [10] and [11]. To address this ongoing problem, Researchers used different technique such unique identification, barcodes and RFID tags. RFID technology was very promising since it received attention

previously in ownership transfer process in supply chain as well as IoT environ-  
40 ment [12], [13], [14], [15], and [16]. Accordingly the security, privacy as well  
as anti-counterfeiting was also addressed to prevent RFID tag counterfeiting, as  
discussed in [17] and [18].

In [19] a detailed survey study was conducted on RFID anti-counterfeiting  
techniques and methods found in the literature. A comparison between those  
45 techniques was also introduced that show the differences between those tech-  
niques and shade a light on the weakness and strength for each approach com-  
pared to others. It stated that the less costly will be the cryptographic approach,  
yet it needs complicated mathematical calculation to guarantee its security. In  
[2], there was a work which was done by Tran and Hong were they proposed  
50 an anti-counterfeiting system for retail environments. They authors used for  
key elements (the RFID tag, the reader, the server, and the seller). In [20], the  
authors suggested to Identify all the cloned tags, just as the work in [21], [22],  
and [23]. As well as segregating RFID tags in different places [24], [25] and [20].  
Also, as we can see in [26], there is the scalability issue which is associated with  
55 the large use of RFID tags in industries such as labs [27], [28], libraries [29],  
liqueur [30] or supply chain which can be reduced significantly while solving the  
Anti-counterfeiting issue.

The researchers came with different types of solutions to overcome the Anti-  
Counterfeiting issues while using RFID technology. For instance, in [31], [31]  
60 and Cheung [32] the authors used 'e-pedigree', while Cheung proposed a two-  
layer RFID-based track and trace anti-counterfeiting system which is different  
than the work in [33] were the researchers proposed used the hash function  
and an XOR operation in their anti-counterfeiting design. Other techniques to  
overcome anti-counterfeiting can be found in [20], [34], [35] and [36] where a  
65 distance bounding technique were used to identify cloned tags without the need  
to use complex cryptography operations. Anti-counterfeiting schemes based on  
cryptography as in [17], [4] and [1]. While other similar proposed schemes can  
be found in [30], [37], [38] and in [39].

## 2.2. Ghaith ET AL. Scheme Analysis

70 In this section we will briefly analysis Ghaith et al scheme which was designed to address product anti-counterfeiting for retailer environments. Firstly, the scheme consisted of two sections, the counterfeit verification protocol and database update protocol. They supported similar work in [4], [2] and [17]. The designed RFID-based anti-counterfeit and anti-theft protocol as we saw above  
75 were used to address the problem from the perspective of a potential buyer in a retail environment. The novelty proposed to use UHF Gen-2 tags attached to products and good which are subject to counterfeit. Those tags were able to handle the operational functions of PRNG and CRC [40] and support a mobile payment via the NFC system [41] [42]. The Protocol was subject to formal and  
80 informal security analysis which both prove the protocol is reliable and secure against the known attacks. The formal security analysis which is the most significant was based on strand space. Since it was efficient we will be using this method here to prove the extended re-selling protocol to be immune against known attacks in the security analysis section. Although the protocol was se-  
85 cure and reliable yet it did not cover the use case of re-selling the same item again which will cause a confusion in the transactions specially if this operation was repeated for many items or many time for the same item. This will result to the protocol to be useless and not effective or practical. To address the use case of the original buyer reselling the product to a second buyer, we propose  
90 an extended version of the protocol that supports this transaction. In order to achieve this outcome, there are essentially two aspects to the transaction that needs to be addressed. Firstly, the new buyer needs to be convinced that the seller is the legitimate owner of the product. In other words, the buyer needs to be convinced that the product is not stolen. Secondly, following the purchase, the ownership of the product needs to be transferred to the new owner in a  
95 secure manner as we will see later in the next section.

### 3. The Re-selling Protocol

In this section, we propose a protocol that will be an extended version for the work that was proposed in [4] and [5]. In order to support the reselling functionality, we assume that the retailer on the completion of the original selling transaction, provides the buyer with a warranty tag and updates the database with the details of the buyer including, the warranty tag ID ( $Wt_{id}$ ), a unique ID for the buyer, the current owner ( $Ex_{id}$ ), tag ID ( $T_{id}$ ) and the *Status*, typically as *sold*. See Table 5.1. We note that the status attribute can take any one of 3 values *sold*, *unsold*, *stolen*. In the event of an attempted reselling by a claimed owner, the prospective buyer is able to execute the reselling protocol to verify the legitimacy of the owner as well as the status of the object. We also assume that all prospective buyers are registered on the system and have been authenticated by the server prior to the initiation of the reselling protocol. We provide the details of the reselling protocol in the following section. As we saw in the previous work mentioned above in [4], [5], [2] and [17] the researchers designed RFID-based anti-counterfeit and anti-theft protocol to address the problem from the perspective of a potential buyer in a retail environment. Yet they didn't discuss the case of the same item being re-sold. they only addressed the use case of a buyer interacting with the retailer. The proposed scheme in [5] consisted of the counterfeit verification protocol and database update protocol. To address the use case of the original buyer reselling the product to a second buyer, we propose an extended version of the protocol that supports this transaction.

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To support this, we extend the proposed frameworks in [4], to propose a ‘reselling protocol’ that can verify the status of an object and also verify the legitimacy of the claimed owner. We adopt a tag yoking based approach that  
130 requires a legitimate owner to be in possession of the tagged object as well as a second warranty tag. The warranty tag ( $Wt_{id}$ ) is a second tag attached to the box or to the warranty card of the product, and is required to be in possession of an owner attempting to resell an item outside of the store. The system set up is very similar to the counterfeit verification protocol and in-order to verify  
135 if a product is stolen or not, we employ a server which will include the details of the tagged object and the associated warranty card which was given to the buyer by the retailer when the item was first purchased.

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150 the legitimacy of a tagged item, verify if the item was stolen or not and change the ownership of the tagged item to the new buyer. The protocol is depicted in Figure 1 and we provide the details below.

#### 155 *Step 1*

The prospective buyer seeking to verify if a product is valid initiates the protocol by sending a query  $Q$  to the seller.

Table 1: Protocol notations

$T_{id}$	id of the tag attached to the item
$T_s$	Shared key between the seller and the server
$T_b$	Shared key between the buyer and the server
$k_{pub}, k_{pr}$	Public and private keys of the server
$f$	hash function
$E_{k_{pub}}, D_{k_{pr}}$	asymmetric encryption and decryption functions
$PRNG(\cdot)$	random number generator
$status$	item status (sold, unsold, stolen)
$Ex_{id'}$	buyer
$Ex_{id}$	Seller
$Wt_{id}$	warranty card ID
$Ack$	Acknowledgment
$Cack$	Complete Acknowledgment

*Step 2*

160 The seller (reader) on receiving the query from the buyer generates  $R_1$  and then computes  $R_2 = R_1 \oplus E_{k_{pub}}(T_{id} \| Wt_{id} \| Ex_{id})$ . The seller then encrypts  $R_1$  using the public key of the server such that  $R_3 = E_{k_{pub}}(R_1 \oplus T_s)$  and sends  $R_2, R_3$  to the buyer.

*Step 3*

165 The prospective buyer (reader) on receiving  $R_2, R_3$  generates a random number  $R_4$  and calculates  $R_5 = R_4 \oplus R_2$  and  $R_6 = E_{k_{pub}}(R_3 \| R_4)$ . The buyer then proceeds to send  $R_5, R_6$  to the server in order to verify if the seller is the legitimate owner of the item and if the item is not stolen.

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*Step 4*

The server decrypts  $R_6$  and  $R_3$  using its secret key  $k_{pr}$  and verifies if  $T_{id}$ ,

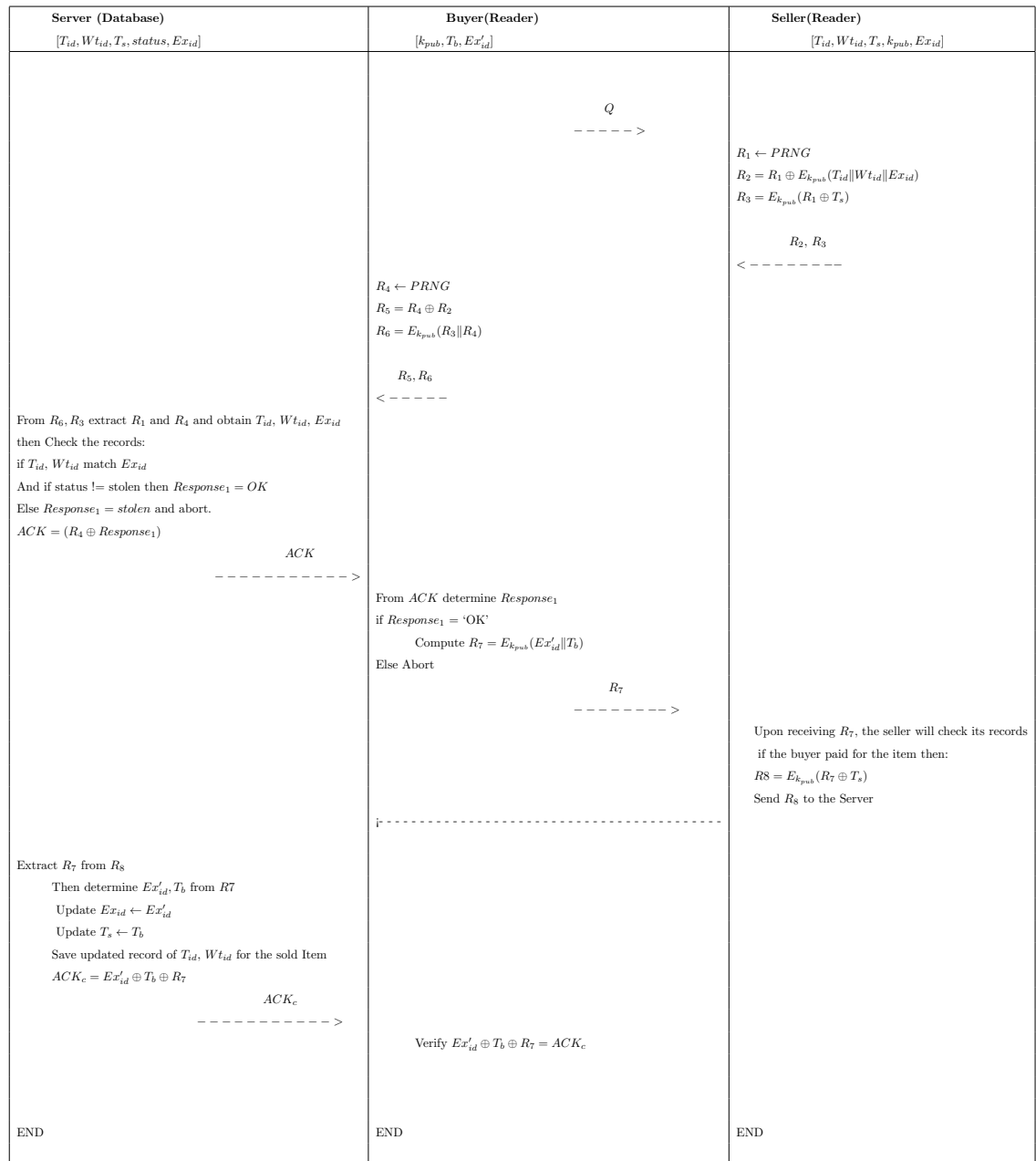


Figure 1: The proposed re-selling protocol

$Wt_{id}$  and  $Ex_{id}$  match a record on the server database. Further it verifies that the 'status' of  $T_{id}$  was not stolen. If so, the server then prepares a response



175  $Response_1 = OK$  else it prepares a  $Response_1 = stolen$  and sends a response  
 $ACK = R_4 \oplus Response$  to the buyer.

#### Step 5

180 The Buyer determines  $Response_1$  from  $ACK$ . If  $Response_1 = OK$  the  
 buyer may decide to buy and sends a request to the seller to buy by sending  
 $R_7 = E_{k_{pub}}(Ex'_{id}||T_b)$ . Else it aborts the transaction.

#### Step 6

185 Upon receiving  $R_7$  from the buyer the seller will check his records if the buyer  
 paid for the item; if so, then he calculates  $R_8 = E_{k_{pub}}(R_7 \oplus T_s)$  and sends it to  
 the database

#### Step 7

190 The server on receiving  $R_8$  decrypts to obtain  $R_7$ , then determine  $Ex'_{id}$  and  
 $T_b$  from  $R_7$ . The server then updates,  $Ex_{id} \leftarrow Ex'_{id}$  and  $T_s \leftarrow T_b$  for  $T_{id}$  to  
 reflect the ownership transfer for the tagged item. It then sends the  $ACK_c =$   
 $Ex'_{id} \oplus T_b \oplus R_7$  to the buyer, to confirm the ownership transfer.

#### Step 8

195 The buyer verifies that  $Ex'_{id} \oplus T_b \oplus R_7 = ACK_c$  to complete the protocol.

## 4. Security Analysis

To prove the reselling protocol is immune and resistant to adversary attacks  
 we commence a formal security analysis that was used previously based on  
 200 strand spaces[43],[44],[45],[46]. Informally, a strand can be defined as sequence  
 of transmission or events that constitutes executions of actions by a legitimate  
 party or executions done by an attacker while the strand space is a collection  
 of strands generated by interactions. While we can define the *point of view*

principle - as a principal *knows* that it involves in actions in its session and  
 205 want to determine the maximum possibility on other behaviors that must have,  
 or could not have occurred.

#### 4.1. The Nonce Test

We suppose that  $R_4$  is peculiar and  $R_4$  is found in a communication in  
 a skeleton  $\mathbb{A}$  at a node  $n_1$ . And assume that,  $n_1$ ,  $R_4$  is found outside all of  
 210 encrypted forms of  $R_4$ . Then in any enrichment  $\mathbb{B}$  of  $\mathbb{A}$  such that  $\mathbb{B}$  is a probable  
 implementation, either:

1. The private key  $k_{pr}$  has been revealed before  $n_1$  transpires, so that  $R_4$  can  
 be mined by the challenger; or
2. Other regular strand comprises a node  $m_1$  where  $R_4$  is communicated  
 215 outside of  $R_5$  or  $R_6$ , yet in all former nodes  $m_0 \Rightarrow^+ m_1$ ,  $m_1$  occurs  
 before  $n_1$ , and  $R_4$  was found only through this encryption.

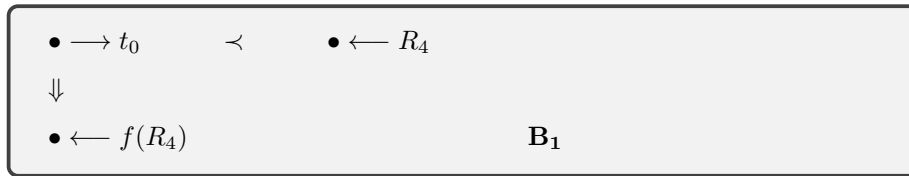
**Proof:** To setup the secrecy of the nonce  $R_4$  suppose a seller  $A$  performed at  
 least the second node of a session, communicating the nonce  $R_4$  with the a mes-  
 sage  $\{R_5, R_6\}$ . An attacker can potentially get the value of  $R_4$  in unprotected  
 220 or encrypted form in at least two cases.

1. If  $k_{pr}$  is compromised an attacker would be able later to determine  $R_4$   
 from  $R_6$ . For this to take place,  $R_4$  must *originate*. Since,  $k_{pr}$  is never  
 transmitted in the protocol, therefore *non-originating*.
2. An attacker can determine if there was a lack of randomness in the random  
 225 number generator what was sent. Since  $R_4$  is uniquely originating thus  
 the random generator does not lack randomness. See Figure two and Figure  
 three.

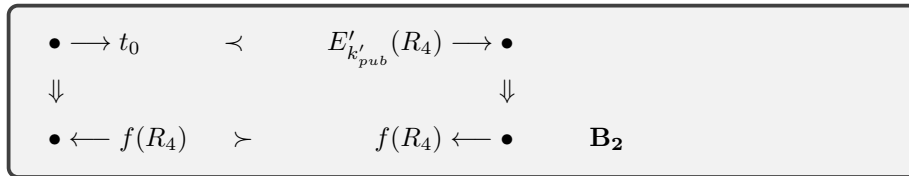
The a *listener* node which is able to determine the value of  $R_4$ , which means  
 that  $R_4$  is disclosed. On the other hand, if  $E$  is describe by the contents of the  
 230 messages in the sequence, then the previous member of  $E$  is a sender node. As  
 $\mathbb{A}_0$ , has a node that  $R_4$  value has no encryption at earliest point there should be  
 a node that has  $R_4$  in unencrypted form according to the minimality principle.



$\text{non} = \{k_{pr}\}$      $\text{unique} = R_4$   
 Figure 2: Skeleton  $\mathbb{B}_0$ :  $t_z$  is  $\{R_7\}$



$\text{non} = \{k_{pr}\}$      $\text{unique} = R_4$   
 Figure 3: Skeleton  $\mathbb{B}_1$ :  $t_0$  is  $\{R_5, R_6\}$

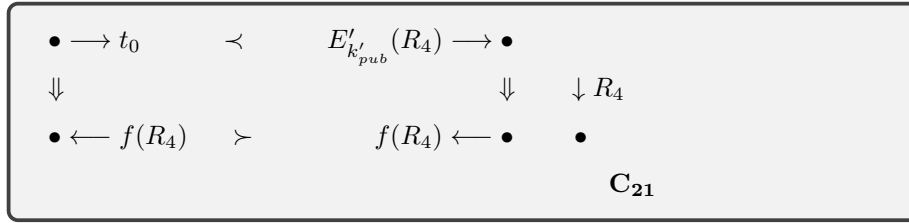


$\text{non} = \{k_{pr}\}$      $\text{unique} = R_4$   
 Figure 4: Skeleton  $\mathbb{B}_2$ :  $t_0$  is  $\{R_5, R_6\}$

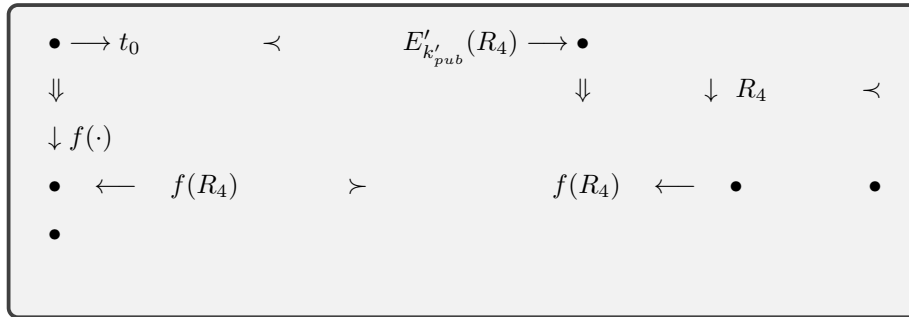
Also, if the attacker was able to generate the same  $R_4$ , then this generation should have unprotected by  $k_{pub}$  in earlier transmission. To obtain  $R_4$  the principle should recognize  $k_{pr}$ , otherwise it can not do this from  $R_5$  or  $R_6$ . See Figure four. ■

#### 4.2. The Authentication Guarantee

Firstly, we assume that  $\text{non}$  and  $\text{unique}$  as we can see from the figures above. See Figures four, five and six. In skeleton  $\mathbb{B}$ , the initiator ( $A$ ) transmits  $R_6$  which means that the first node is unchanged. Yet, the term  $A$  which is used to represent the reception of  $Ack$  by the buyer needs further elaboration. The



$$\mathbf{non} = \{k_{pr}\} \quad \mathbf{unique} = R_4, f(\cdot)$$

Figure 5: Skeleton  $C_{21}$ :  $t_0$  is  $\{R_5, R_6\}$ 

$$\mathbf{non} = \{k_{pr}\} \quad \mathbf{unique} = R_4, f(\cdot)$$

Figure 6: Skeleton  $C_{211}$ :  $t_0$  is  $\{R_5, R_6\}$ 

probable elaborations are:

1. To monitor the discovery of the decryption key  $k_{pr}$  a listener node can be added to test this further elaboration, in case  $k_{pr}$  is discovered by the attacker who prepare a  $t_z$  message.
2. Otherwise, adding a strand of the protocol which needs to be the second node in the strand to sends  $t_z$ . Yet, other possibilities for the terms in  $t_z$  are unconstrained and needs further elaboration.

Exploring  $\mathbb{B}_2$ , which has a unsolved node  $n_D$  receiving  $R_6 = E_{k_{pub}}(R_3 || R_4)$ . If it is so that  $E' = E$  and  $k'_{pub} = k_{pub}$  then no extra elaboration is needed. Or else, there was an execution since  $R_4$  was seen only in  $R_5$  and  $R_6$  is received as  $E'_{k'_{pub}}(R_4)$  on  $n_D$ . Since,  $k_{pr} \in \mathbf{non}$  the first elaboration is not valid which means we were left with the last probability that the a regular strand which

accept  $R_4$  in encrypted procedure  $R_5$  was transmitted in an unencrypted form.  
255 Since there is no such a strand when analyzing  $\mathbb{A}_0$ , so we had only one execution  
left where  $E' = E$  and  $k'_{pub} = k_{pub}$  which is acceptable. ■

#### 4.3. The Secrecy Of $R_4$

Since the value of  $R_4$  must remain secret in the protocol. We examine  
its secrecy by observing  $R_4$  in an unencrypted form via the listener node in  
260 the skeleton  $\mathbb{B}$ .  $R_4$  supposed to be fresh and unguessable for the protocol to  
work. Since every enrichment of  $\mathbb{B}$  requires the structure determined in  $\mathbb{B}_{21}$  that  
contains the listener node for  $R_4$ . Which means it have to be the enrichment  
of  $\mathbb{C}_{21}$ . To observe the discovery of  $\mathbb{C}_{211}$  by accumulating a listener node for  $R_4$ .  
Yet, this is basically an enrichment of skeleton  $\mathbb{A}_0$ ,  $\mathbb{C}_{211}$  which is a dead end as  
265 well. So the extension protocol fulfills the security requirements from the buyers  
point of view.

## 5. Conclusion

In this paper, a reselling protocol that extends the anti-counterfeiting proto-  
cols which were proposed by researchers was presented. The reselling protocol  
270 enables owners to on-sell their items and for the prospective buyers to verify  
the ownership and legitimacy of the products. The proposed protocol is an  
integrated protocol that verifies the ownership and status of the item for sale  
and in addition enables the ownership transfer of the resold item. Detailed se-  
curity analysis based on strand spaces is presented to show that the proposed  
275 extension of the reselling protocol is secure, private and robust against known  
attacks.

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