

Reach/Coreach Tool

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McMaster Centre for Software Certification (McSCert)

1 Introduction

The Reach/Coreach tool is used to trace and highlight data flow and control flow dependencies in Simulink models. Performing a *reachability analysis*, or “*reach*”, on a portion of the model will show the effects that it has on other parts of the model. A *coreachability analysis*, or “*coreach*”, does the opposite, by showing what a portion of the model is dependent on.

The tool has many uses:

- The reachability and coreachability analyses effectively generate a dependency diagram of data and control flow in the model. This helps with model comprehension, and is also useful in identifying places where seemingly independent data flows have hidden dependencies.
- The tool supports impact analysis, as it identifies the parts of a model affected by a potential change of a given block. Impact analysis can be of great value in indicating what effect a change in requirements or design can have on system’s design.
- The tool can be used to find unreachable parts of a model. When reachability analysis is performed on all of a model’s inputs, unhighlighted blocks/signals represent unreachable parts of the model.
- When the coreachability analysis is performed on all of a model’s outputs, the unhighlighted blocks/signals are unnecessary in the sense that they have no (data or control) effect on the outputs of the model.
- The tool can isolate a model into smaller pieces for further analysis, by *slicing* out the highlighted traces.

For more information, one can refer to the published conference paper:

Vera Pantelic, Steven Postma, Mark Lawford, Alexandre Korobkine, Bennett Mackenzie, Jeff Ong, and Marc Bender, “A Toolset for Simulink: Improving Software Engineering Practices in Development with Simulink,” *Proceedings of 3rd International Conference on Model-Driven Engineering and Software Development (MODELSWARD 2015)*, SCITEPRESS, 2015, 50–61.

2 How to Use the Tool

2.1 Prerequisites

Please ensure the following, before using the tool:

- Use MATLAB/Simulink 2011b or newer.
- The tool is present in your MATLAB path. If it is not, go to **File > Set Path...**, press **Add with Subfolders**, and select the **McMaster_Tools** folder. Restart MATLAB after doing so.
- The model is open (or loaded, for command line use).

2.2 Getting Started

The tool can be used via the Simulink Context Menu, which can be viewed by right-clicking in a model. The following options can be available in the Reach/Coreach menu, depending on what is selected in the model (as shown in Figure 1).

- *Reach From Selected* – Available at all times.
- *Coreach From Selected* – Available at all times.
- *Reach/Coreach From Selected* – Available at all times.
- *Clear Highlighting* – Available when a Reach and/or Coreach are present in the model.
- *Slice* – Available when a Reach and/or Coreach are present in the model.
- *Set Colour* – Available at all times.

2.3 Functionality

Reach From Selected

Right-clicking on one or more blocks in the model and then selecting **Reach From Selected** from the Context Menu will perform a reachability analysis and highlight the blocks and signals which are affected by those selected blocks. The highlighting illustrates what parts of the model are dependent on the selected blocks, due to control flow or data flow.

Coreach From Selected

Right-clicking on one or more blocks in the model and then selecting **Coreach From Selected** from the Context Menu will perform a coreachability analysis and highlight the blocks and signals which affect those selected blocks. The highlighting illustrates what parts of the model the selected blocks depend on, due to control flow or data flow.

Reach/Coreach From Selected

Right-clicking on one or more blocks in the model, and then selecting **Reach/Coreach From Selected** from the Context Menu will perform both reachability and coreachability analyses on the selected blocks. The highlighting illustrates, bidirectionally, what parts of the model either impact, or have an impact, on the selected blocks, due to control flow or data flow.

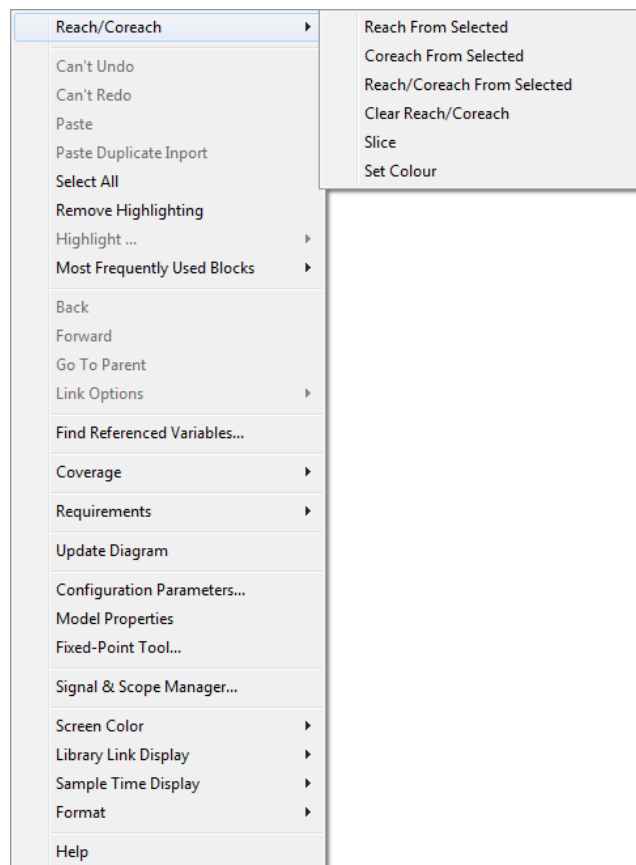


Figure 1: Simulink Context Menu with tool options visible

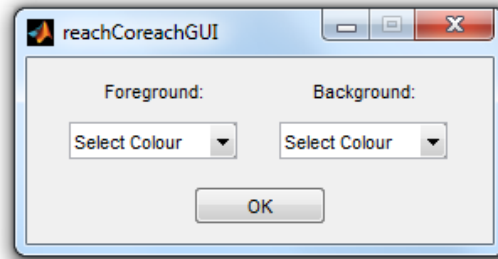


Figure 2: Highlight color selector interface

Clear Highlighting

After a Reach, Coreach, or Reach/Coreach are performed on the model, this option will be enabled. Right-clicking anywhere in the model, and then selecting **Clear Highlighting** from the Context Menu will clear all highlighting in the model.

Slice

After a Reach, Coreach, or Reach/Coreach are performed on the model, this option will be enabled. Right-clicking anywhere in the model, and then selecting **Slice** from the Context Menu will isolate the highlighted parts of the model by removing the non-highlighted portions.

Set Colour

Right-clicking anywhere in the model and then selecting **Set Colour** from the Context Menu will display the user interface shown in Figure 2. The foreground (text and line) and background (block) highlight colours can be customized via the drop down menus, which provide the standard Matlab colours. Clicking **OK** will use the selected colours for all current and future highlighting in the model. The default colours are red (foreground) and yellow (background).

2.4 Errors and Warnings

Any errors or warnings during tool use will be visible in the MATLAB Command Window. Errors will be shown when the model is locked or function parameters are incorrect.

3 Example

Use the command `ReachCoreachDemo` in the Simulink command window to open the example model, shown in Figure 3. This example has control and data flow

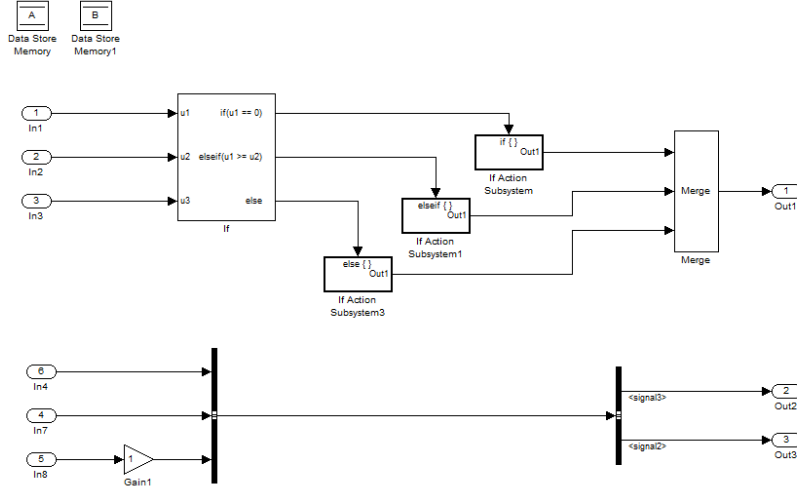


Figure 3: Reach/Coreach demo model

pass through Data Stores, If and If Action subsystems, as well as a Bus Creator and Bus Selector.

1. First, let us perform a reachability analysis to find all possible dependencies of the Inport block In2. To do this, right-click on the block and select the **Reach From Selected** option. The resulting model is shown in Figure 4. In2 is used in the last two condition checks of the If block and this data flow is traced to Outport block Out1. Doing a reachability analysis on In2 also shows clearly that it impacts the Data Store Memory block A.

2. To clear the highlighting now present in the model due to the previous reach operation, right-click anywhere in the model and select the **Clear Highlighting** option. This will revert the model's appearance to that of Figure 3.

3. Now, let us perform a coreachability analysis to find all the parts of the model which the Outport blocks Out2 and Out3 are dependent on. To do this, select both blocks, right-click on them, and select the **Coreach From Selected** option. The resulting model is shown in Figure 5. Blocks Out2 and Out3 are dependent on the Inport block In7 and In8 only, and it is interesting to note that In6 has no impact in the model.

4. We can isolate the coreachability analysis by performing a slice. To do so, right-click anywhere in the model and select the **Slice** option. All blocks and signals which are not highlighted will be deleted from the model. The resulting model is shown in Figure 6.

5. Let us now perform a reach/coreach in the model. First, reopen the demo model, so as to start from new. Right-click on Data Store Memory B, and select the **Reach/Coreach From Selected** option. The resulting model is shown in Figure 7. By doing both a reachability and coreachability analysis on this block,

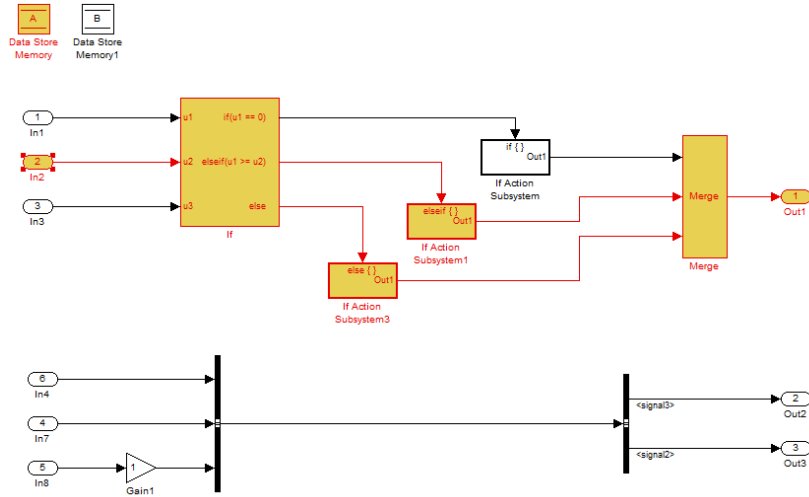


Figure 4: Resulting model after Reach From Selected operation

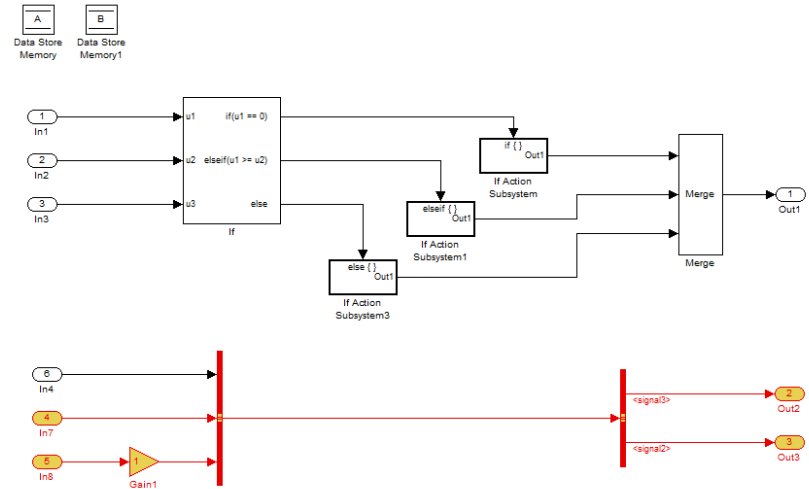


Figure 5: Resulting model after Coreach From Selected operation

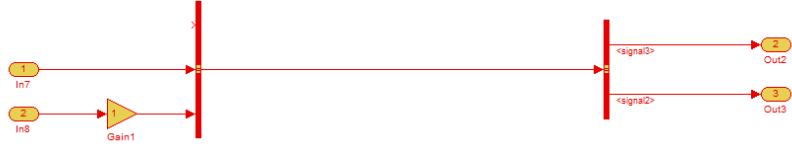


Figure 6: Resulting model after **Slice** operation

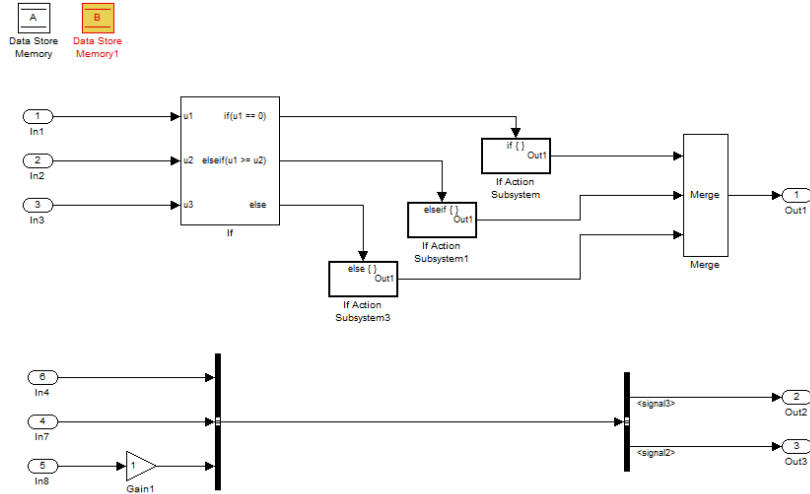


Figure 7: Resulting model after **Reach/Coreach** operation

we can see the total impact that this block has on the model. In this case, no other blocks or signals are highlighted, meaning that this block has no purpose in the mode. It is not used by anything, nor does it perform any operation itself. This block can be considered “dead code”, and should be removed from the design.