Object Compare

Using Object Compare, you can compare the contents of two different Natural sources.

Supported object types are: program, dialog, class, subprogram, subroutine, text, local data area, parameter data area, global data area, helproutine, copycode, function, and adapter.

Note:
There is no extra Natural Security support for enabling/disabling the Object Compare plug-in. However, Object Compare uses the system command LIST to read a Natural source. The same Natural Security support that is provided for the LIST command also applies to Object Compare.

This chapter covers the following topics:

- Before You Start

- Elements of Object Compare

- Setting the Options

- Selecting the Objects to be Compared

- Starting Object Compare

Before You Start

Object Compare is an optional plug-in for Natural Studio. The installation of this plug-in is part of the Natural installation. You can either install this plug-in during a first-time installation or install it later in a separate setup process. For further information on the installation procedure, see the *Installation* documentation.

Before Object Compare can be used, you have to proceed as described in the following topics:

- Prerequisites

- Activating Object Compare

Prerequisites

Work file 30 is used. Therefore, the profile parameter WORK must be set to 30 or higher.

An external tool with a graphical user interface for comparing files must have been installed on the PC. An example of such a tool is ExamDiff. A line command compare tool such as *diff.exe* does not work.

Activating Object Compare

When Object Compare has been installed, it has to be activated in the Plug-In Manager. For detailed information on the activation procedure, see *Plug-in Manager* in the documentation *Using Natural Studio*.

Elements of Object Compare

When Object Compare has been activated in the Plug-in Manager, additional elements are available in the Natural Studio window:

- Context Menu

- Menu Command

- Toolbar

- Options Dialog Box

Context Menu

When the current context (that is, the selected object) allows it, the context menu in the library workspace provides the following additional cascading menu: **Object Compare**. This cascading menu contains the following commands: **Write Left File** and **Write Right File**. See *Selecting the Objects to be Compared* for further information.

Menu Command

The **Tools > Development Tools** menu provides the following additional command: **Start Object Compare**. See *Starting Object Compare* for further information.

Toolbar

An additional toolbar is shown. The button in this toolbar represents the following menu command:

     Start Object Compare

Note:
The display of this toolbar can be switched on and off by choosing **Customize** from the **Tools** menu.

Options Dialog Box

The **Options** dialog box contains an additional page labeled **Object Compare**. See *Setting the Options* for further information.
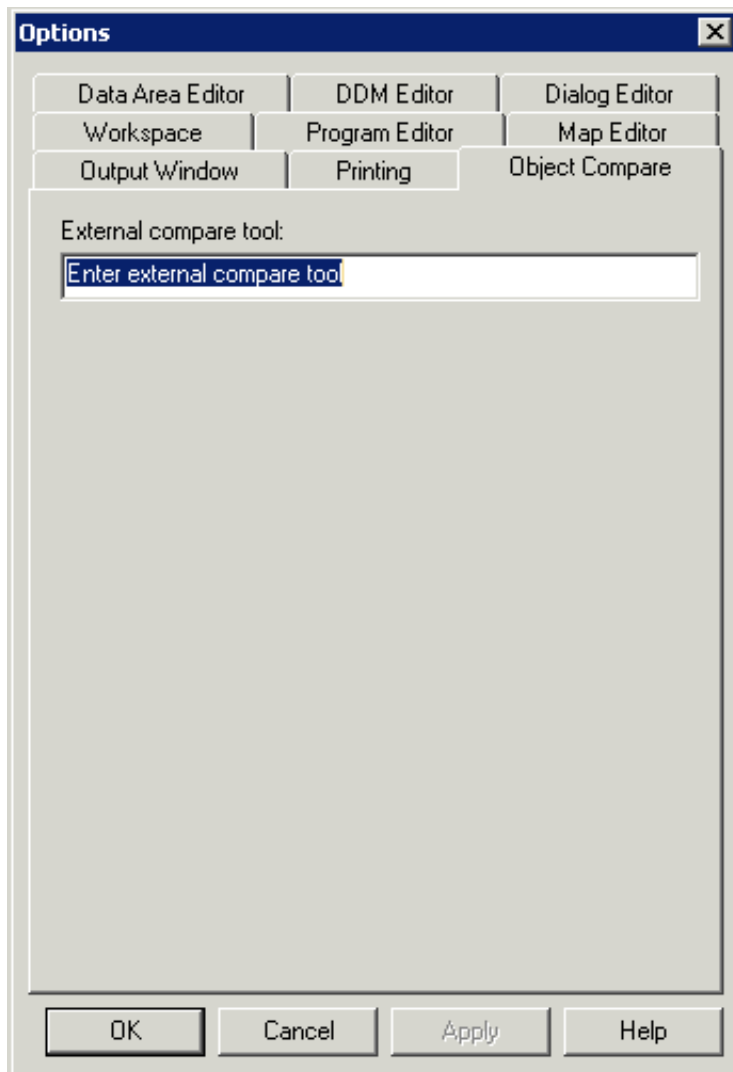
Setting the Options

When Object Compare has been activated, you first have to set the options for this Natural Studio extension.

▶ **To set the options**

1. From the **Tools** menu, choose **Options**.

The **Options** dialog box appears.

2. Select the **Object Compare** page in this dialog box.

3. Specify the following information:

   External compare tool

   The external tool (including path) that is to be used for comparing files.

4. Choose the **OK** button.

Selecting the Objects to be Compared

When you select the objects to be compared, copies of these Natural sources are temporarily stored in the subdirectories *left* and *right* of the temporary Natural directory which has been defined in the local configuration file. See *Installation Assignments* in the *Configuration Utility* documentation.

If a temporary Natural directory has not been defined in the local configuration file, the copies are stored in the directory defined by the Windows environment variable TEMP or, if TEMP is not defined, in the directory defined by the Windows environment variable TMP.

These copies are the input for the external tool.

▶ **To select the objects**

1. In the library workspace, select the first object to be compared.

2. Invoke the context menu and choose **Object Compare > Write Left File**.

   The code for this object will be shown on the left side of the external tool.

3. In the library workspace, select the second object to be compared.

4. Invoke the context menu and choose **Object Compare > Write Right File**.

   The code for this object will be shown on the right side of the external tool.

Starting Object Compare

When you start Object Compare, the external tool, which has been defined in the **Options** dialog box, is invoked with the left and right files you have defined last.

▶ **To start Object Compare**

1. From the **Tools** menu, choose **Development Tools > Start Object Compare**.

   Or:
   When the Object Compare toolbar is shown, choose the following toolbar button.

   The following dialog box appears. It shows the file names that are used in the temporary directories. The file names are composed of the following information: host and port (only shown when an object has been selected on a remote development server), database ID, file number, library name, name of the selected object and an extension which indicates the type of Natural object.
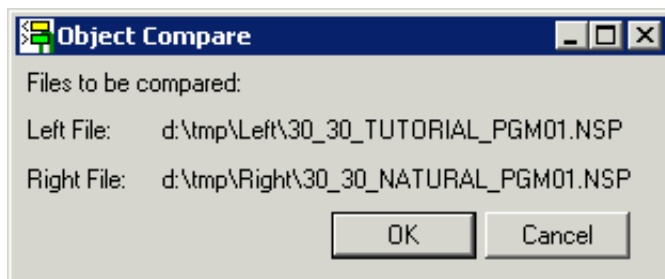
2. Choose the **OK** button to invoke the external tool.