A few notes on the definite article

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1 Partee’s definite article (p. 317)

\[ \text{the } N \] = the individual \( a \) such that \( a \) is the one and only member of \( [N] \), if \( [N] \) has one and only one member; undefined otherwise.

2 Examples

(1) Did the student turn in assignment 1?

(2) Jones is not the student

(3) A student walked in. He looked distracted. He . . .

(4) Chris is not the sole instructor of Linguist 130a.

(5) a. Lyla opened the book. The page was ripped.

   b. #Lyla flipped through the book. The page was ripped.

(6) a. Juan drove up to the busy tollbooths. The toll taker was rude.

   b. #Juan looked at the busy tollbooths. The toll taker was rude.

3 Amended theory of the definite article
Ellen walked into her office. Her computer seemed to have been stolen.

Greg bought a dozen eggs. The egg was broken.

Kim started her computer. The steering wheel was cold.

Hank closed the window. The bee was buzzing just outside it.

At the coffee shop, Joan was reading near the back. The table was a bit tippy.

At the coffee shop, Joan looked around for a place to sit. The table was a bit tippy.

Sam brought his bicycle to the campus bicycle shop. The front wheel was misaligned.

Sam was browsing around the campus bicycle shop. The front wheel was misaligned.

N = 23

N = 24

N = 23

N = 24

N = 47

N = 47

N = 47

N = 47

Mean response with 95% confidence interval