

1 The problem

Say there are a couple bears that regularly visit our yard, and we've taken to calling them Jamie and Kelly. To speak of a recent visit, we could say [1a](#) or [1b](#) but [1c](#) would seem odd.

1) (Trash)

- a. Jamie and Kelly got into the trash again.
- b. The bears got into the trash again.
- c. Bears got into the trash again.

In general, a use of a bare plural connotes an indeterminacy or lack of common knowledge of the group membership. This is a problem for the plurality-based account, for it predicts that [1c](#) should be a perfectly acceptable way to speak of the visit.

2 The solution

The plurality-based account can capture the oddness [1c](#) without recourse to logical form modification. There are a few options available:

Option 1 it is possible to massage the context to eliminate the oddness of bare plurals used to refer to a specific group. Consider a situation in which we have a group of racoon visitors in addition to the bears, and each group leaves a distinctive trace after their visit.

Option 2 The familiarity condition appears to be an implicature because it is cancelable. Bears got into the trash again. Not just any bears; Jamie and Kelly specifically.

Option 3 Lack of specificity does not require existential quantification. Instead, this is just the standard dynamic account of bare plurals introducing a dref that can later be referred to. Following Dekker, drefs are not variables but underdetermined semantic objects. We do not need any adjustment to the LF at all.

Option 4 Indeterminacy is a kind of not-at-issue content. It is probably a presupposition. This is the same sort of response that Gillies and Von Stechow (*Must...stay...strong*) use to explain the purported weakness of *must* as an evidential condition.