Reexamining the Nuuchahnulth Article

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1 The Research Question
The Nuuchahnulth article has historically been important for distinguishing syntactic categories. It fills a semantic argument of the predicate. Inflection is a second-position clitic. The basic syntax of the Nuuchahnulth clause is:

- Verb
- Article

Participants are usually nouns (1, 2) but may be verbs (5) or adjectives (6), where the article is required.

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2 The language
Nuuchahnulth (iso 639-3 mki) is a South Wakashan language spoken on Vancouver Island, Canada.

3 Clause structure and clausal predicates
The basic syntax of the Nuuchahnulth clause is: predicate + article (participants). The syntactic predicate is the word or phrase that expresses the primary semantic relation, and the syntactic predicate fills a semantic argument of the predicate. Inflection is a second-position clitic.

4 The article and clausal participants
Participants are usually nouns (1, 2) but may be verbs (5) or adjectives (6), where the article is required.

5 Syntactico-semantic analysis
Set-theoretic semantics requires inherent variables for all semantic relations: 'person' must be inherent in the syntactic predicate (13), but will occasionally produce an article on a deictic (11), and extremely rarely on a pronoun (14).

6 Conclusion
In Nuuchahnulth, the traditional 'article' on closer inspection is a relativizer. This also leads to a question of how we conceive of articles generally.