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Sommario/riassunto

One of the recurrent questions in historical linguistics is to what extent languages can borrow grammar from other languages. It seems for instance hardly likely that each 'average European' language developed a definite article all by itself, without any influence from neighbouring languages. It is, on the other hand, by no means clear what exactly was borrowed, since the way in which definiteness is expressed differs greatly among the various Germanic and Romance languages and dialects. One of the main aims of this volume is to shed some light on the question of what is similar and what is different in the structure of the noun phrase of the various Romance and Germanic languages and dialects, and what causes this similarity or difference.
