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Titolo	Catching language [[electronic resource]] : the standing challenge of grammar writing / / edited by Felix K. Ameka, Alan Dench, Nicholas Evans
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Altri autori (Persone)	AmekaFelix K DenchAlan Charles EvansNicholas <1956->
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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and indexes.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Introduction: Catching language -- Grammaticography: The art and craft of writing grammars -- Real descriptions: Reflections on native speaker and non-native speaker descriptions of a language -- Realizing Humboldt's dream: Cross-linguistic grammaticalography as data-base creation -- The organization of reference grammars: A typologist user's point of view -- Calculus of possibilities as a technique in linguistic typology -- Descriptive theories, explanatory theories, and Basic Linguistic Theory -- Let the language tell its story? The role of linguistic theory in writing grammars -- On describing word order -- Heterosemy and the grammar-lexicon trade-off -- Field semantics and grammar-writing: Stimulus-based techniques and the study of locative verbs -- Taking a closer look at function verbs: Lexicon, grammar, or both? -- Converbs in an African perspective -- From Eurocentrism to Sinocentrism: The case of disposal constructions in Sinitic languages -- How to miss a paradigm or two: Multifunctional ma- in Tagalog -- The interplay of synchronic and diachronic discovery in Siouan grammar-writing -- The historical and

Sommario/riassunto

Descriptive grammars are our main vehicle for documenting and analysing the linguistic structure of the world's 6,000 languages. They bring together, in one place, a coherent treatment of how the whole language works, and therefore form the primary source of information on a given language, consulted by a wide range of users: areal specialists, typologists, theoreticians of any part of language (syntax, morphology, phonology, historical linguistics etc.), and members of the speech communities concerned. The writing of a descriptive grammar is a major intellectual challenge, that calls on the grammarian to balance a respect for the language's distinctive genius with an awareness of how other languages work, to combine rigour with readability, to depict structural regularities while respecting a corpus of real material, and to represent something of the native speaker's competence while recognising the variation inherent in any speech community. Despite a recent surge of awareness of the need to document little-known languages, there is no book that focusses on the manifold issues that face the author of a descriptive grammar. This volume brings together contributors who approach the problem from a range of angles. Most have written descriptive grammars themselves, but others represent different types of reader. Among the topics they address are: overall issues of grammar design, the complementary roles of outsider and native speaker grammarians, the balance between grammar and lexicon, cross-linguistic comparability, the role of explanation in grammatical description, the interplay of theory and a range of fieldwork methods in language description, the challenges of describing languages in their cultural and historical context, and the tensions between linguistic particularity, established practice of particular schools of linguistic description and the need for a universally commensurable analytic framework. This book will renew the field of grammaticography, addressing a multiple readership of descriptive linguists, typologists, and formal linguists, by bringing together a range of distinguished practitioners from around the world to address these questions.
