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Sommario/riassunto	Almost one quarter of the world's languages are (or were) spoken in the Pacific, making it linguistically the most complex region in the world. This book introduces the grammatical features and semantic structures of Oceanic, Papuan, and Australian languages. It places them in their historical and geographical context, discusses the linguistic evidence for the settlement of the Pacific, and speculates on the reason for the region's many languages. It devotes considerable attention to the effects of contact between speakers of different languages and to the development of pidgin and creole languages in the Pacific.