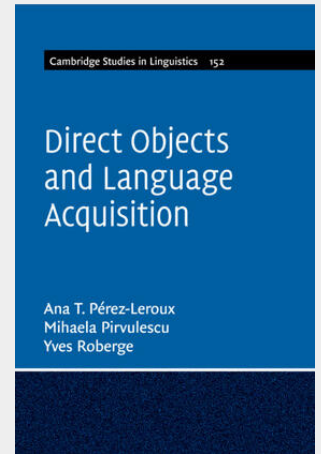


## Direct Objects and Language Acquisition

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Direct object omission is a general occurrence, observed in varying degrees across the world's languages. The expression of verbal transitivity in small children begins with the regular use of verbs without their object, even where object omissions are illicit in the ambient language. Grounded in generative grammar and learnability theory, this book presents a comprehensive view of experimental approaches to object acquisition, and is the first to examine how children rely on the lexical, structural and pragmatic components to unravel the system. The results presented lead to the hypothesis that missing objects in child language should not be seen as a deficit but as a continuous process of knowledge integration. The book argues for a new model of how this aspect of grammar is innately represented from birth. Ideal reading for advanced students and researchers in language acquisition and syntactic theory, the book's opening and closing chapters are also suitable for non-specialist readers.



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