

# **The partial productivity of schematic idioms in Chinese: Evidence from speakers' judgment**

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Idiomatic expressions are generally manifested as lexically fixed. Yet some expressions allow lexical variations in their open slots and thus show certain degree of productivity in actual use. How young children acquire the productive use of idiomatic expressions, however, has rarely been addressed in current literature. The present study explores the developmental trajectory in learning idiom productivity by targeting the quadra-syllabic schematic idioms in Chinese. Results of two Graded Acceptability Judgment tests showed that acquisition of the selective productivity of schematic idioms may undergo an interactive process shaped by its token frequency, structural complexity, inherent semantic relation and the chunk effect of its open morphemes at different age levels. Findings in the studies are further discussed in relation to the emergentist model in idiom learning.

**Keywords:** schematic idioms, partial productivity, emergentist