

Chapter

Artificial Language Learning Methods as a Tool for Sociolinguistic Research

By *Anna Samara*

Book [The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Sociolinguistics](#)

Edition 1st Edition

First Published 2022

Routledge

Pages 12

eBook ISBN 9781003017325

ABSTRACT

To study how languages are learned, experimental researchers have developed precisely controlled methods whereby participants learn and get tested on artificial language systems. Recently, these methods have been enriched with social references (e.g., speaker gender cues) which enables research into socially patterned variable language: languages exhibit variation that depends probabilistically on speaker social characteristics such as one's social class or gender. This chapter introduces artificial language learning as a tool for sociolinguistic research and summarizes previous research that has used artificial language materials to achieve control over input and learner variables that affect the acquisition of social variation.