MIME
Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO BICOCCA
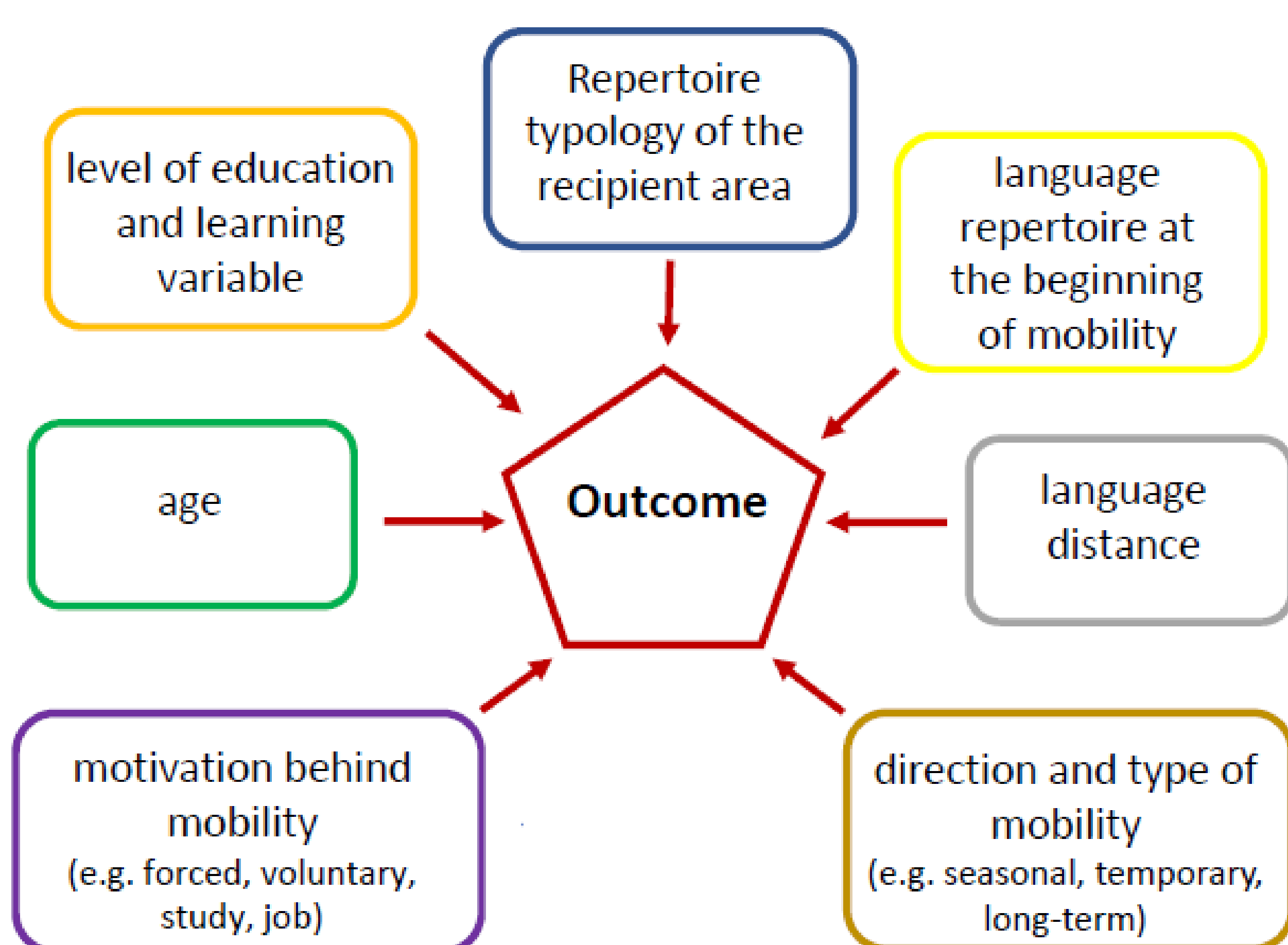
A sociolinguistic perspective on mobility and inclusion

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What fieldworks tell us on language learning attitudes

Objectives

The MIME team at the University of Milano-Bicocca analyzed **different fieldworks** involving people in mobility, language contact and therefore issues of language learning and inclusion in the hosting society.

Several **variables** were taken into account:

Methodology & Fieldworks

The main methodological tool for data elicitation has been **language biographies,** in the fieldworks:

1) Ex-Yugoslavian migrants in multilingual South Tyrol (Italy. 2013-2014).
2) Members of AEGEE gathering in summer universities in Genoa (Italy, 2015), Niš (Serbia, 2015), La Laguna (Tenerife, Spain, 2016).
3) Community of Portuguese migrants in Andorra (2015).
4) White-collar workers in corporations settled in Vasa/Vaasa (Finland, 2015), coming from abroad.

Leaflets in Albanian and Serbian in a library in South Tyrol

Results

Some **common patterns** have been found across the four fieldworks:

- **metalinguistic awareness** is crucial in the process of inclusion, both in maintaining the language(s) of the origin and in acquiring the language(s) of the hosting society;

- an **instrumental attitude** can hinder inclusion, if satisfied by relying on English as a *lingua franca*, which does not foster cultural acclimation in the hosting environment (Vasa/Vaasa, AEGEE) or using intercomprehension as a multilingual strategy (Andorra) or if it is related to negative attitudes towards learning local varieties (e.g. German dialects in South Tyrol);

- **modalities of acquisition** influence language use: languages learnt in formal settings (such as school or University) tend to be used formally, while conversely languages acquired informally will have more influence on a daily-based use.

Linguistic ease for linguistic justice

Minimizing the level of **linguistic unease**, i.e. when

"speakers feel that their pragmatic linguistic competence is not fitting the communicative requirements of the linguistic act they are about to perform – or even that the symbolic value of their speech acts is perceived as misplaced (Dell'Aquila, Gobbo & Iannàccaro, in press)"

may be a good indicator to achieve linguistic justice on a personal level, avoiding risks of semilingualism, i.e. when the individual is in discomfort with all languages in the repertoire.

References
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