

INTRODUCTION

WHY WRITING MATTERS

I ask Tashi how she thinks her life might be different if she didn't know how to write. She responds that without writing she wouldn't have made it to the United States or into her university nursing program. Everything involves writing, she says, "immigration procedures, interviewing, everything." Tashi's nursing program accepted her "all through the writing straight," and her immigration application required more written than oral communication. Being able to write to her husband in English, e-mailing him from India while he was a student in the United States, was essential to their relationship. Lack of a Tibetan keyboard demanded communication be in English. Tashi says, "So I was like, yeah, that's how writing saves."

As we talk in a study room in the campus nursing building, Tashi's hands constantly move, in the air and on the table we sit around. I can hear that movement on the interview recording. Her hands loop as she describes the karmic repercussions of not thanking sponsors who funded her early education. Her pointer fingers draw connected rings when she explains the "concentric" science curriculum she taught in India. Her palms skim circles on the table to demonstrate how she reads to understand "how the words go around" in writing. Around and around Tashi's hands go as she tells me how writing has moved in her life and how it has moved her. Since she was little, Tashi has written among Kannada, Hindi, Tibetan, and English. She has moved her self-taught literacies from home to school and back home to teach her parents. She wrote her way into college, graduate school, a teaching job, and another college in the United States. "So it all matters," she says. "Writing matters."

Tashi's belief that writing matters, and that it saves, is not hyperbolic; it is simply lived reality. Because she has learned, taught, and lived as a multilingual migrant in India and in the United States, Tashi understands writing in mundane and sophisticated ways. She connects writing to every kind of movement in her life. She reads not only for pleasure or content but to understand "how it works." She treats revision as hard essential work. She expresses surprise at the casual approach to writing of her U.S. college peers. When I wonder aloud if the immigration process was hard for her, she shrugs that "it

wasn't too much" for her and she has been helping others with the writing it requires. Tashi is highly literate. She has a deep understanding of the writing process, of how to use her languages for rhetorical effect, of how to pass on these practices to other writers. But as a nursing student in the United States, she often has struggled to earn the grades or respect that might come easily to someone so experienced in writing in English and other languages. Although Tashi has identified as a highly literate person nearly her entire life, she also has found her literacies devalued in the United States, often to the detriment of the literate development that would grant the social and personal goals she imagined migrating for in the first place.

Like the migrant women featured throughout this book, Tashi experiences the perplexing contradictions of multilingual writing every day.¹ At work, at school, and with family, Tashi often finds herself at the complex intersection of simultaneously valued and devalued communication. The movement of migrants, and the language and literacy traditions they bring along, sometimes challenges the literate power structures they meet along the way. They encounter discrimination against accented or multilingual communication in contexts that maintain prestige-based (sometimes invisible) language standards. These are the tensions this book explores. Why are migrants' literate repertoires so unevenly valued? How do migrants maintain multilingual identities while writing against the pressures of assimilation, language change, and identity shifts in a new place? What does tracing writing on the move reveal about how literacy is valued?

Writing on the Move: Migrant Women and the Value of Literacy responds to these questions by showing how social and economic values affect what multilingual writers can do.² Throughout the book I explore how social and economic values in school, workplaces, and governments (held by teachers, colleagues, border agents, relatives, and the writers themselves) shape how literate repertoires come to be recognized or ignored. The book's structure, however, turns this equation inside out: I look at moving literacies to see how values work. Each chapter features a different kind of literate movement—fluid, fixed, frictive—to show how valuation differently enables writers to move their literacies. Writers move fluidly when their values agree with those of others; writers' movement is fixed when their and others' values are mismatched; and writers experience friction when their values simultaneously do and don't correspond to those of others. In three turns, fluidity, fixity, and friction prove to be different examples of the same phenomenon: multilingual migrants writing with and against the currents of socioeconomic values. Step by step, the book builds a process of literate valuation, supporting the main argument: literacies are revalued because they move.

This book is based on my qualitative study of twenty-five multilingual migrant women in the United States, which is described in detail in chapter 1. I initially set out to challenge narratives of downwardly mobile migrant women by exploring how multilingual women used their literacies to get what they needed or do what they wanted after migration. But as I met more and more writers, eventually creating a participant group from seventeen countries, cumulatively speaking twenty-two languages, my interest turned away from simple upward or downward social mobility and toward the phenomenon of mobile literacy itself. Beyond asking if literacies do or do not move among languages and the places these women have lived in the world, I focused instead on the how and why of movement: the ways in which literacies move, the agents of that movement, and the fluctuating values that mediate it. Throughout this study and the writing of this book, I have found that literate lives are not simply mobile or immobile, free or fixed, successful or failed, but are instead lived at a nexus of prestige, prejudice, and power that creates multiple mobilities, simultaneous struggle and success.

The argument that literacies and lives are subject to changing values is likely an obvious statement to many. But the commonsense quality of this claim should ring slightly false against the backdrop of contemporary conversations around migration and multilingualism in and outside academia.³ Academic understandings of multilingual writing are in process. Researchers and teachers continue to debate the merits of teaching language standards, or encouraging students to use multiple languages in writing, or treating classrooms as experimental spaces while acknowledging that other spaces privilege dominant codes.⁴ Rarely do scholars consider how the values that literacy meets as it moves affect these debates.⁵ Questions remain about the communication preferences of increasingly globalized workplaces, the access that may or may not result from fluency in prestige codes, the cognitive and empathetic benefits of multilingual literacies, and the importance for humans of actualizing more than one cultural and linguistic background. In academia we continue, rightly, to worry about who should be giving or withholding which literate resources to whom.

Furthermore, widely held notions of literacy and language beyond academia are basic enough to cause real problems for multilingual migrants. Legislation that keeps literacy education monolingual in a dominant language, implicit or explicit policy that withholds language assistance in public services, everyday linguistic discrimination around accents, unconventional forms, or nondominant languages used in public—these are all official, institutionalized results of common misunderstandings about language acquisition and use. They are also the result of racism, ethnocentrism, and fear of the

unknown. The coming together of these elements, particularly in a period of intensified migration, creates an especially fraught set of attitudes toward multilingualism, accent, and writing practices associated with difference. These attitudes stem from short-term memory of immigrant origins, bootstrap beliefs in meritocratic success, and cyclical xenophobia rooted in English monolingual, border-based, majority-white national assumptions. Literate success and struggle are assumed to be regulated by neutral literacy skills rather than by powerful social beliefs. Reading and writing in a dominant language continues to be treated as a miracle method for migrant assimilation, and a lack of dominant language literacy becomes evidence of migrants' unsuitability for citizenship. Such logic permeates debates about education policy, detention or deportation, and such public services as health care and welfare. It also makes the values that regulate languages and writers invisible.

In other words, the claim that literacies and lives are subject to changing values is not so obvious as to be recognized by those who make decisions about migrant literacies and lives. We have yet to decide who is responsible for literacy or who is in charge of developing and sharing literate resources. We have yet to fully consider how literacy materials of migration (passports, tests, keyboards, visas) and literacy contexts at the crossroads of mobility (immigration interview rooms, lines at the border, ESL classrooms, and refugee camps) are saturated with values. *Writing on the Move* assumes that there is work to be done in understanding the relationship of literacy, mobility, and values. The book extends transnational literacy studies and research on multilingual writing by accounting for the way social and economic values regulate the relative worth of migrants' literacies. As a result, the book offers a theory of literacy that complicates metaphors of mobility, transfer, and translation used in research on writing, showing how social and economic values have real consequences for multilingual migrant lives, including their felt ability to write and communicate. Writing matters not just for who multilingual migrant writers are and what skills they have, but also for what they can do in and understand about the world.

IN TERMS OF LITERACY

Writing on the Move relies on several key terms that are used in a variety of ways in research on multilingual writing. To put these terms in the context of literacy, and to use them with care, I explain what I mean by "literate repertoires and resources," "literate movement," and "literate valuation." In my use of "literate" I follow Prior's "literate activity," which indicates "situated, mediated, and dispersed" activity "strongly motivated and mediated by texts" (138). In this way, "literate" does not mean the opposite of "illiterate," or simply the ability to read and write, but rather all communicative activity that cre-

ate literacy and language experiences with paper, books, screens, keyboards, pens and pencils, or any other compositional materials. By using “literate” as an adjective for resources, repertoires, movement, valuation, and life, I look at these phenomena specifically in the everyday activities of readers, writers, speakers, and listeners.

Literate Repertoires and Resources

“Literate repertoires” are the complex cluster of reading, writing, listening, and speaking strategies and experiences that multilingual migrants call on to write. I use “repertoire” to describe dynamic sets of literate practices learned in specific, lived social contexts. In this understanding, repertoires are not static containers of competence or skills but are instead “biographically organized complexes of resources” that reflect the both formal and ephemeral literate experiences gathered across the “rhythms of actual human lives” (Blommaert and Backus 8). Over time, repertoires include metalinguistic understandings and language ideologies.⁶ Thus what may appear to be an incomplete repertoire is actually a lived repertoire in process.⁷

My use of repertoire also is influenced by terms or theories that emphasize what a repertoire *has* rather than what it *lacks*. Hornberger’s continua of biliteracy and Valdés’s L1/L2 user continuum, for example, emphasize the assets of bilinguality, which nevertheless fluctuate depending on communication topic, domain, or situation (Valdés, “Bilingualism” 414). The assumption underlying these continua, which I adopt throughout the book, is that fragmented learning opportunities do not limit users’ skills but instead shape existing strengths in different ways. Brandt’s theory of “accumulating literacy” emphasizes the impact of life experience on a repertoire, showing how “family histories and autobiographical constructions” condition literacy practices “piece[d] together” in response to “rapid social change” (“Accumulating” 651, 666). Moll et al.’s much-cited “funds of knowledge” approach recognizes students’ rich cultural and cognitive resources and assumes that “people are competent, they have knowledge, and their life experiences have given them that knowledge” (González, Moll, and Amanti ix–x). Although these theories don’t use repertoire explicitly, they contribute important additive approaches to the repertoires writers use to compose. In this book, repertoires include the literate strategies developed across the lifespan and around the world, as well as users’ metalinguistic understandings and language ideologies that condition what they do with these practices in communicative situations.

When I call literate repertoires fluid, fixed, or frictive, I mean that participants have described materials or practices that do or do not move smoothly among languages, writers, or readers. Literate resources are slippery and elusive as writers grasp for them. This understanding of movement is informed by

Appadurai's theories of "scapes"—ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes—that highlight "the fluid, irregular shapes" of a mobile global culture (33). Treating a repertoire as the *landscape* of a writer's literate life acknowledges the geography across which it was developed, the uneven or "irregular" nature of its resources, and the influence of global pressures migrants encounter.

If repertoires are a complex of resources, then resources likewise are created over the course of a literate life. But much scholarly work uses "resources" to mean skills or knowledge that writers call on to compose—strategies that are assumed to be durable, solid, or there for writers when they need them. Well-intentioned scholarship claims that writers use their resources to compose with intention, with language varieties they already possess rather than standard varieties they lack.⁸ Scholars aim to foreground literate amplitude and challenge deficit models of literacy. But occasionally their claims treat literacy and language as stable tool-like resources that writers access from durable toolkit-like repertoires. Resources are said to be brought to classrooms, drawn on actively, and maintained at a writer's disposal. But it is not clear what these resources are made of or where they come from. How do writers' lives impact what resources are worth? Lu's notion of "discursive resources" as the "complex and sometimes conflicting templates of languages, Englishes, discourses, senses of self, visions of life, and notions of one's relations with others and the world" begins to account for the lived conflict that shapes resources ("Fast Capitalism" 28). But much use of "resource" lacks this consideration of inequality. Looking more closely at what literate resources are made of—literacy, language, and identity—suggests why resources might be wide open to constantly shifting valuation.

For example, literacy scholars have long noted that literacy is too volatile to guarantee any social or economic outcome.⁹ Following Foucault and Bourdieu, Luke has argued that the value of literacy is not defined by literate competence that is "acquired in the school and fully credentialed through grades or degrees," but rather it is mediated through power structures within particular institutional and discursive domains ("Genres" 327). If one cannot access these domains because of accent, lack of documentation, or financial status, one cannot put their existing resources to use and these resources may remain inaccessible or invisible. In other words, whether existing literacy resources can be converted into further material or symbolic gain is contingent upon the relations of power that grant or withhold value. No matter the extent of one's literate repertoire or the deft wielding of one's literacy and language resources, literacy cannot guarantee social or economic mobility without access to these powerful relations. Therefore, according to Luke, the value of literacy has no "intrinsic power of the skill, text, competency or genre acquired" but

instead depends on (1) any given market's valuing of that resource and (2) access to institutions, social networks, or powerful individuals who can convert those resources into further social purchase ("Genres" 329). If one is already at risk of discrimination within certain institutions like schools, as subjects are oftentimes immigrants, refugees, or dialect speakers, the value of one's literacy can be volatile indeed.

Furthermore, scholars have long demonstrated that languages are too dependent on social use and conditions to guarantee economic betterment. Because languages are "not fixed codes by themselves [but] are fluid codes framed within social practices" (García, *Bilingual* 32), language resources can easily lose their value from users' real or perceived accent, race, or gender.¹⁰ So while Jacquemet claims that learning English, Chinese, or French in Albania is "the best—and sometimes the only—opportunity currently available to many bright people . . . for social and geographical mobility" (267), and Crawford notes that developing language resources in Vietnam can "secure a job with a foreign company that pays significantly more" (82), Brandt finds uneven literacy sponsorship—family support but not economic profit—behind the "unstable currency" of Spanish-English bilingualism in the United States (*Literacy* 179–80), and Prendergast finds that "no amount of English fluency" can "completely transcend" the stereotypical designations the global economy assigns Slovakian English users (4). The language resources gathered together in a repertoire certainly can be dependably utilized for social and personal betterment, but they also can be, in some contexts, less than dependable.

Finally, the identities of multilingual migrant writers are as shifting and in-process as they are for all, but they also are comprised of specific kinds of multiplicity—multiple languages, multiple cultures, and multiple globally minded epistemologies.¹¹ Writers might stand "on both shores at once" (Anzaldúa 100), or "be at once 'here' and 'there'" (Suárez-Orozco, "Everything" 73). Their language-based identity might be especially "the incarnation of the in-between, of the multiple intersections produced by the languages and culture s/he has encountered" (Cronin 134). As applied linguist Jun Liu explains, multilingual identity and writing practices are mutually constitutive: "It is the establishment of my own L2 identity that makes me a good L2 writer. Likewise, it is the constant practice in L2 writing that helps me establish my L2 identity" (130). And Anzaldúa reminds us that "ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity," vividly showing how multilingual identities are represented in bodies, emotions, and often painful life experiences. She famously provokes those who would separate language from identity, writing, "if you want to really hurt me, talk badly about my language" (Anzaldúa 81). In other words, literate identity is more than language heritage or affiliation. What

writers can or can't do with their language resources has as much to do with the skills or strategies they've acquired as with the lives they've lived. Whether lived experiences are described by writers as positive or negative, they leave impressions and abrasions on writers, on their tongues and in their ears, on their emotions, self-perceptions, or imagined goals for the future. Literate resources inform not only writers' repertoires but also who they can or want to be.

Literate resources are informed by these volatile components of literacy, language, and identity. Made of this discursive matter, resources are fickle, as are the repertoires they comprise. Heller notes that it is hard to "abstract away" from the values "attached to linguistic forms and practices" ("Commodification" 102). But the abstract use of resources is still common in scholarship, opening up a terminological vacuum into which expectations and beliefs are loaded. One of these expectations is that literate resources are durable—unchanging, always on call, economically fungible—as writers carry them into new writing or communicative contexts. But the value of literate resources is always in flux. Although scholars emphasize literate resources in order to argue for what writers *have* rather than what they *lack*, an abstract discourse of resources can leave multilingual writers feeling less rather than more empowered. Literate repertoires and the resources are in process before, during, and after migration. They are continually produced in practice, making them subject to a process of literate valuation shaped by an assemblage of economic and social values.

Literate Mobility

Studies of mobility have considered all kinds of geographic, affective, embodied, literate, social, and economic mobilities in empirical, qualitative, and metaphorical ways. Mobility has been described as physical, as bodies traveling through space; intellectual, as minds are "moved" . . . to see from a different point of view" (Reynolds, *Geographies* 2); and political, as protests slowly or suddenly make cultural change. Some scholars suggest that any consideration of human liberty is premised on the freedom to move, where mobility is not just a state-defined "human right" but definitive of the human capacity to "creatively transform our objective circumstances" (De Genova, "Deportation" 39). These forms of mobility often are related. Consider how the Great Migration shows African Americans enacting a social movement by physically moving north. I define mobility in terms of inequality: Having the choice to move or stay put, to mobilize oneself or one's literacies, is a form of economically and socially advantageous control.¹² Put another way, I define mobility in terms of the tensions—the oppositional energy between things moving and stalled—that this book seeks to pull apart. Fluidity, fixity, and

friction are all *kinds* of mobility that differently reveal how literacy is valued. In three turns, I show how fluid, fixed, and frictive movement is dynamically related in the lived experience of everyday writers.

Mobility often has been understood as a product of globalization or transnationalism.¹³ In many cases it has been framed as a phenomenon of fluidity—flexible and flowing, across ever-loosening borders and boundaries. A “mobilities paradigm” has deemed many kinds of movement (walking, subway-riding, electronic transmission) and many movers (from travelers and tourists to nomads and refugees) as participating in “an uninterrupted ‘flow’” of global movement with “no single origin and no simple end” (Suárez-Orozco, “Everything” 73; Papastergiadis 4).¹⁴ But in the context of globalization, mobility is not always experienced as free-flowing movement. The condition of late capitalism affects the trajectories of people moving within or against these flows: “some people are more in charge of it than others; some initiate flows and movement, others don’t; some are more on the receiving-end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it” (Massey 149).¹⁵ Migration scholars suggest that forced movement like deportation maintains inequality, keeps workers available for exploitation, and seriously challenges claims about a free-flowing world.¹⁶

I take up this complexity by considering how a range of mobility is experienced by migrants. Specifically, I turn toward literate repertoires and resources, exploring how repertoires on the move perform different kinds of literate mobility. By “literate mobility,” I mean the cross-border travel of literate practices and materials with migrants, the movement among languages in writing, and the persistence of literate identities in new contexts.¹⁷ But the term “mobile” does not mean only fluid, productive movement. Following the above definition of mobility, I treat “literate mobility” as a complex phenomenon that includes fixed and frictive movements. This differentiated treatment has some precedent in literacy and language studies.

On the one hand, literacy and language have been treated as fluid phenomena. Literacy has been shown to “travel from informal school settings to more formal classroom ones” (Richardson Bruna 234); multilingual writers are said to enact “transcultural repositioning” to foster a literate “consciousness that travels well” and “move[s] back and forth more productively between and among different languages and dialects” (Guerra, “Putting Literacy” 32–33). Languages are defined not as “fixed codes” but as “fluid codes framed within social practices” (García, *Bilingual* 32).¹⁸ Fluidity among practices, locations, or languages is especially emphasized by “trans” prefixes for -national, -lingual, or -linguaging. For example, Pennycook characterizes a linguistic “fluidity of relations across global contexts” as one way “to think and be trans” (*Global Englishes* 36, 44). But these terms are often deployed precisely to em-

phasize innovation or creativity and thus can highlight fluidity to the sacrifice of a full examination of relations of movement.¹⁹ For this reason scholars have argued for a more critical accounting of literate movement. For example, Reynolds argues that concepts of “dwelling” must account for “unequal access to modes of travel” (*Geographies* 40); Jacquemet notes that “transidiomatic practices” manifest not through free-flowing patterns one might expect under globalization, but against the “ideological hardening of social boundaries” of local social contexts (263).²⁰ Vieira’s sociomaterial theory of literacy reminds us that migrants’ control over their papers and practices is only “as strong as the strongest make them” (“Social Consequences”).

I follow the critical approach. Sometimes in enthusiasm for supporting multilingual writers, scholars miss the fixity inherent in any literate movement. In this oversight, “trans” approaches can overlook the complicating factor of lost or stuck literacy attempts, fixed language identifications for purposes of cultural survival, and material conditions that mediate gained or lost languages. Furthermore, differentiated mobility has important explanatory power. A mobile analytic that includes fluidity, fixity, and friction highlights the social, political, and institutional boundaries that literacies cross and the powerful forces that move language around. It explains why literacy has the potential to simultaneously empower and disempower writers. By looking at literacy practices moving into and across contexts, we can see how migrants press up against socioeconomic values that regulate these contexts through tests, classroom-based routines, or implicit workplace policies. We see how appeals to efficiency or clarity in writing fit into claims about streamlined work demands and how social values carry economic worth and weight as they are put into practice. In effect, tracing literacies as they move reveals *how* they gain or lose meaning as they pick up traction or lose speed.

Literate Valuation

I argue that literacy is revalued because it moves. Literate valuation is one way to conceptualize this process. It shows not only what kinds of values are applied to literacy but how literacies are valued. Institutions such as schools place high or low value on resources; writers promote certain values through their routines and traditions; teachers or employers make implicit values official through practice. Each chapter explores how social values (family, community, and personal designations of importance or respect) meet up with economic assignments of value (the use or profitability of literate commodities) in multilingual migrant literacies.²¹ This book shows how multilingual migrants regularly experience the effects—entrance to schools, citizenship gained, jobs won and lost—of economic or social forces that revalue their literate resources.

While actors—both writers and institutions—are distinct in what they value, they are similar in how they value, using both social and economic processes to deem some literacies and languages more worthy than others. This commonality shows literate valuation to be a fundamental experience of multilingual migrant literacy, one that shows how movement can change what literacies are worth. The book shows how the process of literate valuation is carried out and highlights the literate values woven through the everyday activity of this study's multilingual migrants. Literate valuation is especially shaped through the commodification of language.²² The literate resources that power a globalizing economy differ from primary (metals, food) or industrialized (electronics, processed food) resources in that they trade in information and services (Heller and Duchene 9). That these resources are useful for economic goals turns language users into language workers who move literate information and materials around the world. This movement occurs across globalization's "territories of value" (Heyman) and linguistic markets (Bourdieu, "Economics") that drive the value of literate resources up and down and change their meaning. While scholars have argued that languages have shifted from markers of identity to identity-free items for exchange, others find that identity and commodity meet in language.²³ The social marginalization of certain groups thus impacts the economic valuation of these groups' literate repertoires.

In fact, literate valuation shows how tightly bound economic and social values are. Heller has argued that language-as-identity, too, is for sale (i.e., "authentic" language performances for tourism) ("Commodification"). But in this book literate valuation especially considers how values of social worth are put into lived practice in families, communities, work, and school. Based on several iterations of coded participant accounts (see Appendix D, "Detailed Coding Procedures"), Tables 1 and 2 elaborate the economic and social values that were salient in participants' literate experiences. Table 1 details the social and economic sources of literate valuation, their cultural, community, and family-based origins. Table 2 elaborates the actual features of these values, as described by participants. These tables are the result of analysis, rather than organizational schemes that guided analytic processes. Both tables show a generalized representation of values based on participants' insights rather than an exhaustive list of values that could exist in all literate lives.

In Table 1 the social values assigned to literate resources are driven by family, community, and cultural notions about important, beneficial, or respectful uses of literacy and language—principled notions for how literate resources merit respect or appreciation. Economic value is driven by the desire to support oneself and one's family. In order to find work, participants often converted multilingual practices they deemed "natural" or unremark-

TABLE 1. Where Participants' Literate Values Come From

Economic value	Work and school	Price of literacy-mediated access to visas, programs, spaces, organizations
		Price of classes, books, materials
		Pay for formal teaching
		Pay for formal translation/interpretation
	Communities	"Help" for neighbors or acquaintances
		Informal translation/interpretation
		Informal teaching
Social value	Families	Cultural traits judged to be important
		Community or individual activities deemed beneficial
		Family or community involvement that merits respect
		Language and literacy practices that are worth caring about
		Principles of appreciation for traditions, routines, habits

Source: Author.

able outside of the United States into literate assets in the United States. Their literate resources picked up economic value and produced beneficial material consequences in terms of pay, at professional levels not experienced before migration. But participants also assigned economic value to the informal labor exchanged among community members. As migrants offer their literate resources to basic literacy programs, social service organizations, or to acquaintances they just met, their literate resources become valuable in a different sense. Multilingual migrants aid each other's English language acquisition, serve as spur-of-the-moment interpreters, or participate in nonpaid language labor in order to support an informal community economy. In other words, their literate resources are valuable to them and their communities even when resources are not exchanged for pay.

Table 2 shows what the process of literate valuation produces for the migrant writers in this study—what, for them, literate values are. Across the top, the table lists the practices and language use participants described most frequently. Down the left side, the table lists the audiences and domains the participants used to contextualize descriptions of values. The boxes themselves are generalizations of the values participants frequently described. Again, the table is not meant to be exhaustive of all literate values. These are the beliefs

TABLE 2. What Participants' Literate Values Are

Audience and domain	Writing	Reading	English	Multilingualism
Parent as audience—at home or in community	Indicator of class, act of rebellion, communication to connect (notes, letters, texts)	Indicator of class, act of rebellion, necessary to live	Aspirational, indicator of class	Unremarkable norm
Child or sibling as audience—at home or in community	For play, for self-education	For bonding, for tradition	Necessary to live, indicator of class	Essential element of identity, unremarkable norm
Self as audience—at home or in community	To keep secrets, to express, for creativity	To keep company with self	To move beyond family	Expression, essential element of identity
Employer as audience—work in the United States	Necessary, constant, overwhelming	Assumed, rarely described	Unstated requirement, unstated policy	Reason for employment, profitable, unstated violation of norms and policy
Teachers as audience—in the United States	Informal, structured, to express a strong opinion	For comprehension, for content	Assumed norm, choppy, clear, short, discriminatory	Beneficial resources to showcase, resources to keep out of schoolwork
Teachers as audience—beyond the United States	To show content mastery, for testing, formal	Assumed, rarely described	Rule-based, colonial, monetized, profitable	Unremarkable norm
State as audience—in or beyond United States	Communication for bureaucratic demand, procedural, to produce paper trail		For proof of belonging, display assimilation	Outsider status (depending on racial appearance—if white, then could be marker of education)

Source: Author.

and designations of worth that participants in this study described and that support the chapters' analyses. The table shows the social and economic values that multilingual migrants hold and those that they meet as they move.

Table 2 previews what the chapters elaborate: personal and institutional values sometimes do and sometimes do not match. When writers' and institutional values are a good match (Zelizer), writers' repertoires often are more economically viable, but when they aren't, literate repertoires become economically and socially devalued.²⁴ Participants' accounts of literate movement especially show the benefit of matching values. Fluid movement of literate repertoires tends to promote literacy innovation and productivity because writers' values line up with institutional ones. In a way these writers know how to play the literacy game, and they benefit from this knowledge.²⁵ But as is clear in the tables, values can be contradictory or confusing. In these cases, writers don't know how to play the game and can't recognize how their own values aren't meeting institutional ones. They experience fixed literate movement that inhibits the realization of literate identities. In fact, the frictive movement of literate repertoires shows that writers' values can simultaneously match and not match institutional values. Writers experience friction when they know how to play the literacy game, matching their values to those of institutions, but the game keeps changing.

Thus multilingual migrants' repertoires come to be valued through the fortune of well-matched values, by "contingencies which arise in the cultural and social field" that literate practices on the move encounter continually (Luke, "Material" 330). In a way, multilingual migrants are always playing the literacy game: guessing what their resources are worth, hoping that new teachers, classmates, or bosses think their resources are as worthy as they do. The ones who succeed are the ones who can adapt as the game changes. Those who hold on tight or resist flexibility seem to lose. This does not mean that migrants alone are responsible for adapting or losing—powerful individuals and institutions also are implicated in these outcomes; they are responsible for creating conditions that support migrants who may or may not want to adapt. Nevertheless, the value of literacy seems to be much more about games and matches, the synergy of writers and institutional actors valuing and revaluing literacy in determined unity. The literacy game can be absurd (as the accounts in this book occasionally show), but it can also be very serious. Grades, jobs, raises, program progress, and family and emotional well-being are all at stake. These stakes are high for migrants with visa designations tied to good grades, kept jobs, and program progress. Thus the question becomes not why some literacies move with their writers while others are lost, but how writers on the move navigate the social and economic values that define literacy through constant contradictions.

Writing on the Move pulls apart the process of literate valuation in order to rebuild an understanding of how multilingual literacy is valued. After chapter 1's description of the study that informs this book, chapters 2, 3, and 4 focus on a different kind of literate movement. Migrant writers describe creating, adapting, and losing writing practices in motion, carrying around highly charged experiences and beliefs that influence the ways in which they are or are not able to write. Each chapter analyzes the everyday experiences of multilingual migrant writers in order to show with sharp specificity the complicated reality of multilingual literacy. In the end, tracing writing on the move reveals deep and sometimes debilitating contradictions in the way multilingual migrants' literate repertoires are valued.