

**Reading to Relate: Identity, Motivation and Literacy among
Adolescent Immigrant Language Learners**

Liv Thorstensson Dávila, Ph.D. | livtd@illinois.edu

This presentation will focus on the literacy practices of two African immigrant adolescent English learners in relation to motivation and identity. Data were collected through interviews, language classroom observations, and document analysis and focused on reading practices and preferences in relation to language, gender, immigration, and school performance. Findings reveal that while learning to read in a new language these students were simultaneously and purposefully developing literacy in their first languages through autonomous reading practices, including reading native-language texts, and on-line news sources. Findings also suggest that scaffolding autonomous reading may be one way to help newly arrived immigrant language learners develop academic and social literacy and foster a sense of belonging in their new communities.