

# The Roots of Language.

CHRISTINA TORTORA, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, ENGLISH  
COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND: THE COMPARATIVE MORPHO-SYNTAX  
OF APPALACHIAN ENGLISH

Professor Christina Tortora, a linguist and syntactician with an interest in understanding universal grammar, which is the grammar that underlies all human languages, received funding for her \$275,000 National Science Foundation research project.

Focusing on subject/verb agreement, Professor Tortora and her colleagues Dr. Marcel den Dikken of The Graduate Center, Judy Bernstein of William Paterson University, Raffaella Zanuttini of Georgetown University, and research assistant Erin Quirk, seek to understand how the syntax of Appalachian English is similar to and differs from the syntax of African American English, Standard English, Belfast English, and many other varieties of English spoken both in the United States and other Anglophone countries.

L to R: Tortora, Bernstein, Quirk, den Dikken