THE DELETION OF THE LAST CONSONANT IN A CONSONANT CLUSTER AT THE CODA BY PLATEAU SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

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Abstract
This paper examines the deletion of the last consonant in a consonant cluster at the coda by Plateau speakers of English in North Central Nigeria. When a word ends in two or three consonants, speakers of English from Plateau State, North Central part of the country, usually delete the last one during speech. This has been of keen interest to the researcher, and therefore decides to investigate the phenomenon that leads to this incidence as a way of proffering a linguistic explanation to it. To do this, a total of twenty-two sentences containing words that end in two or three consonants were used as data elicitation technique from some of these speakers or users of English, and that forms the first part of data collected for this study. The words whose last consonants are deleted word-finally are transcribed phonetically for purposes of clarity. The second part of the data constitutes the elicitation of six words of common nouns each from ten indigenous languages of Plateau. This is so done with a view to discovering whether there is evidence of consonant cluster in those languages or not, either at the onset or coda in order for the researcher to pin down the factor responsible for the deletion. From there, the study concludes that there is no evidence of consonant cluster at the coda in Plateau languages, and where it does, it only exists as digraph, as in: shīk-bīsh 'sin', kàt-ɗang 'if' (Mwaghavul); kámbọng 'cocoyam' (Ron); ìshọsh 'honey bee', nànámàng 'girls' (Afîzere); ìkpáng 'plate', ǹding 'water' (Tarok), etc.

Keywords: Plateau, consonant, consonant cluster, coda, consonant deletion.

Introduction
This phenomenon of deleting the last consonant in a consonant cluster at the coda by Plateau speakers of English has been a great drawer of the researchers' attention. This study, which is on the deletion of the last consonant in a consonant cluster by the majority of speakers of English in Plateau State, North Central Nigeria, is embarked upon to carefully scrutinise the circumstance that necessitates this incidence of deletion. Plateau State was created out of the then Benue-Plateau State on February 3, 1976 by the Murtala Mohammed Regime, with its capital city in Jos. Plateau State gets its name from the Jos Plateau, a mountainous area in the north of the state with captivating rock formations. Bare rocks are scattered across the grasslands, which cover the plateau. The altitude ranges from around 1,200 meters (about 4000 feet) to a peak of 1,829 metres above sea level in the Shere Hills range near Jos. Located in North Central Nigeria, Plateau State occupies 30,913 square kilometres. Plateau State shares borders with Kaduna and Bauchi States

to the North, Nassarawa State to the East, Benue to the South, and Taraba State to the East. Plateau State is located between latitude 80°24'N and longitude 80°32' and 100°38' east. According to the 2006 National Population Census, Plateau has three million, one hundred and seventy-eight thousand seven hundred and twelve inhabitants.

Linguistically, Plateau State has over forty ethno-linguistic groups but no single group is large enough to claim majority position. Some of the indigenous tribes in the State include: Afizere, Amo, Anaguta, Angas, Aten, Berom, Bogghom, Buji, Challa, Chip, Fier, Gashish, Goemai, Irigwe, Jarawa, Jukun, Kwagalak, Kwalla, Meryang, Miship, Montol, Mushere, Mupum, Mwaghavul, Ngas, Piapung, Pyem, Ron, Kulere, Tarok, Youm, etc. Each ethnic group has its own distinct language, but as with the rest of the country, English is the official language in Plateau State, although Hausa has gained acceptability as a medium of communication (http://www.informationng.com).

Statement of the Research Problem
Prior to the time of this research, there has not been any investigative study that could lead to a valid statement or conclusion on why speakers of English (who are indigenes of Plateau State, North-Central Nigeria) delete the last consonant sound in a cluster of consonants during speech, or utterance. This in itself is a wide knowledge gap that has been waiting to be filled. In view of this, the researchers were moved or motivated by strong inner drive as well as deep passion to carry out this study with a view to filling this knowledge gap.

Literature Review
Our review of literature here will focus mainly on the important concepts that constitute the topic or title of this research, which are consonant, consonant cluster, deletion and coda. It will also include empirical review of works done previously by other scholars that are connected to this study.

Conceptual Review
Consonants, as pointed out by Szczegielniak (2001:12), are sounds produced with some restriction or closure in the vocal tract. In other words, consonants are sounds in which the air stream meets some obstacles in the mouth on its way up from the lungs. According to Crystal (1991:58), a cluster is a term used in the analysis of connected speech to refer to any sequence of adjacent consonants occurring initially or finally in a syllable, such as the initial [br-] of *bread* or the final [-st] of *best*. In English, for example, up to three consonants can occur initially, as in [spr-], [spl-], [skw-]; and up to four can occur finally, as in *glimpsed* [-mpst] and *twelfths* [-lfθs]. On his part, Yule (1996:58) discloses that both the onset and the coda can consist of more than one consonant, which is referred to as consonant cluster. He further stresses that the combination *st* is a consonant cluster (CC) as onset in the word *stop*, and as coda in the word *post*. In addition, Jones (2003:103) states that a cluster refers to two or more consonant phonemes in sequence, with no vowel sound between them. He further emphasises that English can allow up to three consonants in a cluster syllable initially in the onset, and four syllable finally in the coda; exemplifying that the word *stray* /streɪ/ begins with three consonants, and *sixths* /siksθs/ ends with four. Similarly, Gregová (2010:1) reports that a consonant cluster is a group or sequence of consonants that appear together in a syllable without a vowel between them, and can be studied in terms of graphemes, phones and phonemes. She further states that in languages, there is rarely one-to-one correspondence between letters and phonemic (sound) units. For example, the concrete realisation of the individual segments such as vowels and consonants in their linear sequences (words, phrases, sentences) is influenced by various pronunciation and phonological rules of a given language (e.g. assimilation) and not all combinations of graphemes have their reflection in speech. Considering these definitions, it implies that for a sequence of consonants to be regarded as a cluster, there must not be a vowel between them, and that a cluster could occur either at the onset or coda or both could be present in the syllable structure of the words of a language. But our focus in this study is how a consonant is deleted in a consonant cluster at the coda. Below is a syllable structure schema showing consonant cluster both at the onset and coda in English language:
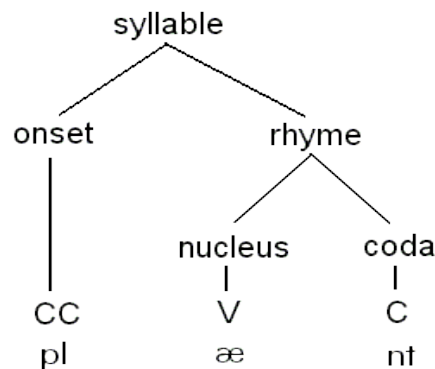
Notice that the English word **plant** on the above schema consists of a single CCVCC syllable. This syllable has been broken up into its onset and its rhyme. The *onset* of a syllable consists of the consonants that precede the vowel. The rhyme is the part of a syllable which consists of its vowel and any consonant sounds that come after it. The rhyme is further divided into the nucleus and the coda. The nucleus is made up of the vowel or vowels that come after the onset and before the coda. This means that the nucleus is often placed in between the onset and the coda. Lastly, the *coda* is any consonant or consonant cluster that comes after the nucleus.

Deletion is the art of removing something that has been written or printed. Consonant deletion, therefore, means eliminating a consonant sound in a word. In an attempt to explain the concept of deletion, Ovu (2013:10) points out that pronouncing the words such as *psychology*, *pseudonym*, *psalm*, *psychiatrics*, *psyche*, etc. with the initial /p/ sound would apparently result in a deviant consonant cluster in English. This is because at onset, English cannot allow a combination of plosive + fricative. Thus, faced by this dilemma, English speakers usually drop or delete the consonant sound /p/ while retaining that of /s/ in their pronunciation. At word medially and finally, he further posits that the consonant sound /b/ is usually silent in two main areas, namely where it combines with the sound /t/ and where it combines with that of /m/, as exemplified in the following words: su**b**tle, dou**b**t, de**b**t, plum**b**, clim**b**, dum**b**, tom**b**, bom**b**, etc. adding that the reason for this is the peculiarity of English phonotactics which does not allow a sequence of /mb/ or /bm/ sounds to form a cluster whether word initially or finally. But considering the focus of our study, this is not the case at all with the Plateau speakers of English. The deletion of the last consonant in a cluster of consonants word-finally in speech is never attributable to the phonotactics of English. This, indeed, is the driving force behind this study, that is, to lay bare before the reader what actually is responsible for this incidence among the Plateau speakers of English.

Empirical Review
Empirically, studies on a subject such as this are not very common in Nigeria, and perhaps, other parts of the world. However, few related researches have been conducted by some language scholars both home and abroad, even though they are not linked to a particular group of people like ours. They are as follows:

Davidson (2004) embarked on research entitled *Schwa Elision in Fast Speech: Segmental Deletion or Gestural Overlap?* Through intuition, the researcher observed phonological analyses attributing schwa elision to across-the-board segmental deletion, and phonetic accounts proposing that elision, being characterised as gestural overlap have been restricted to very few sequence types. In the method, 28 different [#CəC-] sequences were examined and 9 participants (6 males and 3 females) were used to define appropriate acoustic criteria for elision, to establish whether elision is a deletion process or the endpoint of a continuum of increasing overlap, and to discover whether elision rates vary for individual speakers. The result of the study revealed that the acoustic patterns for elision are consistent with an overlap account. Individual speakers differ as to whether they increase elision only at faster speech rates, or elide regardless of rate.

Furthermore, Gregová (2010) conducted a study titled *A Comparative Analysis of Consonant Clusters in English and Slovak*. According to the study, after the researcher compared the word-initial and word-final consonant clusters, the result showed that frequency, combinatory and distribution possibilities of the Slovak phonemes are higher than those of the English phonemes. The analysis also indicates that Slovak is rich in various consonant clusters which usually cannot be accounted for by morphology: they cannot be treated as complex sounds, and they do not represent separate morphemes.

Moreover, Gerlach (2010) undertook a study titled *The Acquisition of Consonant Feature Sequences: Harmony, Metathesis and Deletion Patterns in Phonological Development*. The researcher, in this research, examines three processes affecting consonants in child speech: harmony (long-distance assimilation) involving major place features as in coat [koʊk]; long-distance metathesis as in cup [pʌk]; and initial consonant deletion as in fish [ɪʃ]. These processes are unattested in adult phonology, leading to proposals for child-specific constraints. Initial consonant deletion in particular, is a little-understood phenomenon thought to be idiosyncratic but initial consonant deletion as reported in eight languages reveals systematic deletion patterns affecting continuants and sequences of different consonants. From the methodology, the data used displayed evidence for both constraint demotion and promotion in learning, as well as distinct roles for two types of faithfulness constraints: one mandates the preservation of non-default features that are specified in the underlying representation, while the other evaluates identity of a correspondent segment to any non-default feature associated with a segment.

Lastly, Ovu (2015) carried out a study titled *Consonant Deletion in English: Phonotactic Explications and Implications for Teaching Spelling in an ESL Situation*. The study considers consonant deletion as one of the major contributors to the irregularities in the spelling system of English, and accounts for a great number of pronunciation errors committed by the L2 users of English. The main thrust of this paper is to show that consonant deletion is not often haphazardly done in English but rather it is systematic and governed by some rules which obtain from the phonemic system of the language. These rules are known as phonotactic rules, and their non-observance would not only result in erroneous pronunciation but could portray a speaker as being careless and at times incompetent in using the language – a situation that may be very embarrassing. Focusing on the phonotactic basis of consonant deletion, the paper attempted to bridge this yawning gap by providing some insights into some simple but effective ways of improving the ESL users' spelling ability and boosting their confidence when communicating with native speakers of English or before an international audience.

Theoretical Framework
This research is hinged on Firth's theory of descriptive linguistics of 1951. Notice that originally, the term descriptive was coined to express the distinction between historical or comparative linguistics, which dominated much of 19th century linguistics, and the emerging structuralist paradigm with its emphasis on the notion of a synchronic system. Firth, as echoed by Love (1986:31) maintains that the business of linguistics is to describe language. She further reports that Firth takes linguistics to be primarily concerned with the speech-events themselves, and dealing with speech-events will involve the systematic deployment of analytical constructs and categories, which may in practice turn out to be rather similar to the constructs and categories involved in the analysis of abstract systems underlying speech-events. In a clearer perspective, descriptive linguistics is a study of a language, its structure, and its rules as they are used in daily life by its speakers from all walks of life, including standard and nonstandard varieties, that is, descriptive linguistics describes the language, its structure, and the syntactic rules that govern sentence and phrase constructions. Importantly, the concept of descriptive analysis is, in principle, applicable to any set of data, provided that these data represent the actual usage of a language under study at a given time in a given speech community.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that descriptive theory perfectly fits into this study. This is because in this research, we will describe vividly how Plateau speakers of English delete the last consonant at the coda in a cluster of consonants in an utterance. And of course, such description can never be complete, valid and

reliable without the use of data. Data is considered as a tool with which linguists analyse or describe any language or its use by a particular speech community scientifically with a view to arriving at valid conclusions.

Methodology

This study which investigates the deletion of the last consonant in a consonant cluster at the coda by Plateau speakers of English in North Central Nigeria is a qualitative one. Amenorvi (2011:62) quotes Shank (2002) as saying that a qualitative study can be defined as a form of systematic empirical enquiry into meaning. Systematic here means that the study should be well planned and organised, and empirical here means that such an enquiry should be grounded in the world of experience. In line with this, the researcher has experientially witnessed how Plateau speakers of English do delete the last consonant in a consonant cluster at the word-final position (coda) during speech, an incidence which informed the present study. Furthermore, as cited in Amenorvi (2011:62), Fraenkel and Norman (2002) as well as Reinard (1998) outline the major characteristics of a qualitative study, which include: "qualitative data, flexible design, naturalistic enquiry, personal contact and insight, inductive analysis and holistic perspective". In view of this, a total of twenty-two sentences containing words whose word-final consonants were deleted as done by Plateau speakers of English was used as the first part of data collected for this study. For purposes of clarity and specificity, the words whose final consonants were deleted were transcribed phonetically. In addition, six words each were elicited from ten Plateau indigenous languages, and this formed the second part of the data. This is used as a tool through which the researchers were enabled to pin down the factor responsible for this phenomenon among Plateau speakers of English. All these were done using personal contact and informal interview technique through phone conversations.

Data Presentation and Analysis/Discussion

As mentioned earlier on in our methodology, a total of twenty-two sentences containing words whose word-final consonants were deleted as done by Plateau speakers of English is used as the first part of data collected for this study, while six words each were elicited from ten Plateau indigenous languages, and this forms the second part of the data. This is done with the sole aim of boosting our analysis and to make us reach a valid and cogent conclusion. We therefore present the following data as garnered for this study:

(A) 1. The *studen* is sick. [*stju:dən*] instead of /**stju:dənt**/.
2. Please do not stop my *movemen*. [*mu:v.mən*] instead of /**mu:v.mənt**/.
3. God always keeps *covenan*. [kʌv.ən.ən] instead of /**kʌv.ən.ənt**/.
4. Our *governmen* has failed. [*gʌvən.men*] instead of /**gʌvən.ment**/.
5. Let us go and *plan* cassava. [*plɑ:n*] instead of /**plɑ:nt**/.
6. Please *repen* of your sin today. [*rɪpen*] instead of /**rɪpent**/.
7. I had *lef* before you came. [*lef*] instead of /**left**/.
8. INEC is planning to *shif* the 2019 elections. [*ʃif*] instead of /**ʃift**/.
9. The *shaf* of his car had been removed. [*ʃa:f*] instead of /**ʃa:ft**/.
10. What is my *faul* in this matter? [*fɔ:l*] instead of /**fɔ:lt**/.
11. Please let the *secon* person come in. [*sekən*] instead of /**sekənd**/.
12. It is very *col* in Jos at the moment. [*kəʊl*] instead of /**kəʊld**/.
13. Our meeting today will *hol* by 2:00 pm. [*həʊl*] instead of /**həʊld**/.
14. Please *fol* the bed sheet gently. [*fəʊl*] instead of /**fəʊld**/.
15. The *conduc* of the general elections was peaceful. [*kɒndʌk*] instead of /**kɒndʌkt**/.
16. *Apec* of the Theory of Syntax. [*æspek*] instead of /**æspekt**/.
17. The *defunc* Gongola State is the present Taraba State. [*dɪfʌŋk*] instead of /**dɪfʌŋkt**/.
18. *Adjunc* means extra information. [*ædʒʌŋk*] instead of /**ædʒʌŋkt**/.
19. Always *respec* your elders. [*rɪspek*] instead of /**rɪspekt**/.
20. What is the *cos* of this handset? [*kɒs*] instead of /**kɒst**/.
21. The ship is approaching our *coas*. [*kəʊs*] instead of /**kəʊst**/.
22. Please *roas* this maize for me. [*rəʊs*] instead of /**rəʊst**/.

Analysis/Discussion

Considering the above data, it is clear that the consonant deleted in **1-6** involves the alveolar plosive /**t**/, which usually occurs when preceded by the alveolar nasal consonant /**n**/. From **7-10**, the consonant deleted still remains the alveolar plosive /**t**/ but this time around, the deletion occurs when preceded by the labiodental fricative /**f**/ or the alveolar lateral /**l**/. Then from **11-14**, we can see that the deleted consonant is the alveolar plosive /**d**/, and it usually occurs when preceded by the alveolar nasal consonant /**n**/ or the alveolar lateral /**l**/. Furthermore, from **15-22**, the consonant involved in the deletion, once again, is the alveolar plosive /**t**/. However, as we can see clearly, the deletion often takes place when it is preceded by the velar plosive /**k**/, the velar nasal /**n**/ and the alveolar fricative /**s**/.

Semantic Consequence

This instance or circumstance of deleting the last consonant word finally in a cluster of consonants by Plateau speakers of English, as displayed in the above data, without doubt, could affect the semantics, comprehension or intelligibility of the words concerned in this matter. This is because the words have been altered both orthographically and phonetically, and as such, has semantic consequence. Consider a Plateau speaker of English, who says to his interlocutor, who is a native speaker of English in a conversation: *Let us go and* ***plan*** *cassava*; *INEC is planning to* ***shif*** *the 2019 general elections*; *I had* ***lef*** *before you came*; *What is my* ***faul*** *in this matter*?; *The* ***shaf*** *of his car had been removed*; *Our meeting today will* ***hol*** *by 2:00 pm*; *Please* ***fol*** *the bed sheet gently*; *What is the* ***cos*** *of this handset*?; etc. This could get him/her (the native speaker of English interlocutor) confused because the words contained in these sentences are obviously unfamiliar to him/her thereby impeding intelligibility or comprehension. To bridge this semantic gap, therefore, such a native speaker of English must devote time to learn this phonological phenomenon so as to get familiar with it.

The Phonetic Factor Responsible for this incidence

To be able to conclusively capture or pin down the phonetic factor that accounts for this phenomenon among Plateau speakers of English, we present here a data (comprising mainly common nouns) elicited from ten Plateau indigenous languages, which forms the second part of our data for this study. The data has been transcribed phonetically for clarity, as outlined below:

(B) 1. **Tarok**

Word		Gloss
(a) Nzhi	/ŋzī/	'house'
(b) Itòk	/ɪtɔk/	'chair'
(c) Iyamrì	/ījɑmrì/	'food'
(d) Ǹding	/ǹdɪŋ/	'water'
(e) Ìkpáng	/ìkpáŋ/	'plate'
(f) Ákwàp	/ákʷàp/	'shoe'.

2. **Ron**

Word		Gloss
(a) Kámbọng	/kámbɔŋ/	'cocoyam'
(b) Challà	/ʧəlà/	'peace'
(c) Dán'máfwàshì	/dánmáfwàʃì/	'snake'
(d) Bakam	/bākām/	'knife'
(e) Rawúl	/rɔwúl/	'potatoes'
(f) Ligit	/līgīt/	'drinks'.

3. **Afizere**

Word		Gloss
(a) Ìshọsh	/ìʃɔʃ/	'bee'
(b) Ìnyám	/ìɲám/	'antelope'
(c) Àgàbú	/àgàbú/	'dog'

(d) Nànámàng   /nànámàŋ/   'girls'
(e) Ìzɔs /ìzɔs/   'fish'
(f) Kùróɳg   /kùróŋ/   'fire'.

4. Mwaghavul

Word		Gloss
(a) Làng-tíng	/làŋtíŋ/	'witness'
(b) Shik-bish	/ʃĭkbīʃ/	'sin'
(c) Mpúlpùl	/mpúlpùl/	'butterfly'
(d) Ṅtìsh	/ŋ̀tìʃ/	'snail'
(e) Dàkwat	/dàkʷāt/	'male hunter'
(f) Naanfwang	/nāānfwāŋ/	'God guides'.

5. Ngas

Word		Gloss
(a) Chùk	/tʃòk/	'knife'
(b) Pùk	/pùk/	'soup'
(c) Nyár	/njɛ́r/	'bird'
(d) Ngón	/ngóŋ/	'snake'
(e) Gùrm	/gùrəm/	'person'
(f) Chòk	/tʃɔ̀k/	'neck'.

6. Berom

Word		Gloss
(a) Ṅshí	/ŋ̀ʃĭ/	'water'
(b) Lóh	/ló/	'house'
(c) Hwóng	/hwóŋ/	'girl'
(d) Ndém	/ndém/	'law enforcement agent'
(e) Vú	/vú/	'dog'
(f) Pyénrè	/pjénrè/	'food'.

7. Kulere

Word		Gloss
(a) Àm	/àm/	'water'
(b) Riek	/rɪēk/	'eye'
(c) Rìyau	/rìjaʊ/	'hand'
(d) Taná	/tæná/	'nose'
(e) Lush	/lūʃ/	'tongue'
(f) gɨrau	/gɨaʊ/	'teeth'.

8. Iguta

Word		Gloss
(a) Mini	/mɪnɪ/	'water'
(b) Rizhì	/rɪzì/	'eye'
(c) Wərí	/wərí/	'hand'
(d) Bìmu	/bìmū/	'nose'
(e) Rəlem	/rəlēm/	'tongue
(f) Anyíyí		'teeth'.

9. Piapung

Word		Goss
(a) Kyang	/kjáŋ/	'hoe'
(b) Ham	/hàm/	'water'

(c)	Shim	/ʃĭm/	'yam
(d)	Shẹrẹp	/ʃɛrɛp/	'fish'
(e)	Kong	/kɔ̆ŋ/	'river'
(f)	Tẹng	/tɛŋ/	'tree'.

10. Mupun

	Word		**Gloss**
(a)	Fwan	/fʷuan/	'rain'
(b)	Kam	/kam/	'stick'
(c)	Pel	/pɛl/	'leaves'
(d)	Wur	/wur/	'breast'
(e)	Fwat	/fʷuat/	'ashes'
(f)	Amkur	/amku:r/	'sea'.

A careful consideration of the data from the ten indigenous languages of Plateau above reveals that their words do have consonant cluster at the onset (word-initially) but do not have at the coda (word-finally). Even in Ngas language (number 6) where we would have considered the word *gùrm* 'person' as an exception, we discover that in actual realisation or articulation, a schwa vowel is inserted between the two consonants at the coda. In fact, the schwa is neither weak nor silent but sonorous to the extent that it is tone-marked as shown thus: /gùrəm/.

Research Findings
From the data presentation and analysis above, the following are the findings of this study: (i) Plateau speakers of English delete the last consonant in a cluster of consonants due to the fact that consonant cluster does not exist at the coda (word-finally) in their individual native or indigenous languages; (ii) when we view the word *gùrm* 'person' in Ngas from the standpoint of orthography, one could be misled to disagree with the statement above but when viewed phonetically – gùrm /gùrəm/, it is valid. This is because in actual realisation or articulation, a schwa vowel is inserted between the two consonants at the coda, and the schwa becomes sonorous to the point of receiving a low tone-mark.

Contribution to Knowledge
Our data presentation and analysis, particularly data (B), has exposed to the readership the reason why Plateau speakers of English delete the last consonant in a cluster of consonants, and that is, no consonant cluster at the coda in the indigenous languages of Plateau. In addition, the insertion of a schwa in the Ngas word gùrm /gùrəm/ 'person' has aided in validating our claim that consonant cluster does not exist in Plateau indigenous languages. Consequently, the effect or influence of this is brought to bear on their use of the English language, which is popularly referred to as mother-tongue interference under teaching and learning situation. Without any iota of doubt, the issues pointed out here have immensely contributed to knowledge in both disciplines of English and Linguistics. Besides, being a pioneer, this study is expected to produce chain reactions because it will surely provoke more researches in this area of linguistic study.

Conclusion
This paper examines the deletion of the last consonant in a consonant cluster at the coda by Plateau speakers of English in North Central Nigeria. From the data gathered, presented and analysed in this research, it is obvious from our finding that indigenous languages of Plateau have consonant cluster at the onset (word-initially) but do not have at the coda or word-finally. And where a cluster of consonants is present orthographically, it only exists as a digraph as in: *shīk-bīsh* /ʃĭkbīʃ/ 'sin', *kàt-dang* /kàt-dãŋ/ 'if', *naanfwang* /nāānfwāŋ/ 'God guides' (Mwaghavul); *kámbọng* /kámbɔŋ/ 'cocoyam' (Ron); *ìshọsh* /ìʃɔʃ/ 'honey bee', *nànámàng* /nànámàŋ/ 'girls' (Afizere); *ìkpáng* /ìkpáŋ/ 'plate', *ǹding* /ŋ̀dɪŋ/ 'water' (Tarok), etc. Finally, as far as the study of language is concerned, this research is an invaluable asset globally. This means that it will continue to be of immense value and relevance as well as a reference point to scholars, language enthusiasts and students in English and Linguistics from one generation after another anytime, anywhere.

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