Languages and the First World War: Communicating in a Transnational War

Edited by
Julian Walker and
Christophe Declercq

Languages and the First World
War: Communicating in a
Transnational War

Palgrave Studies in Languages at War

Series Editors: **Hilary Footitt**, University of Reading, UK and **Michael Kelly**, University of Southampton, UK.

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Languages and the First World War: Communicating in a Transnational War

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Cover illustration: © Julian Walker

Printed on acid-free paper

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Sandrijn Van Den Noortgate graduated as an interpreter from the University of Antwerp with an MA dissertation describing the role and position of interpreters in the first half of the twentieth century and how a true profession emerged as a result of the practice of mediation in wartime. She is currently working as a freelance translator.

Julian Walker is a writer and research-based artist, and an educator at the British Library. He has written five books on the history of the English language, including *Trench Talk: Words of the First World War*, co-authored with Peter Doyle (2012), and books on social history. He co-organized the 'Languages and the First World War' conference, and has written widely online on language change during and after the First World War.

Introduction

Meetings between Languages

Christophe Declercq and Julian Walker

The collection of essays in this book developed from the conference 'Languages and the First World War', held at the University of Antwerp and the British Library in June 2014. That conference offered the opportunity to bring together several aspects of the wartime and post-war linguistic interpretations of the experience of the First World War: language collecting, change within languages, influences between languages, interpretation, status difference between languages, dialects and argots. The second volume deals with *Memory and Representation*; this first volume concerns *Communicating in a Transnational War*.

The essays in this volume look at how languages changed, connected and were observed during the period of the conflict. The problems and opportunities of dealing with foreign languages are explored in the first section, 'Languages at the Front', communication with home and the imagination and creation of a sense of 'home' in 'Writing Home', the second section, the management of language and languages away from the combat zones in the third section, 'The Home Front', and reactions to language change in the final section, 'Collecting Conflict Words'.

While many of the essays are based on the extraordinary phenomenon of the Western Front, there are intriguing facets of language change and manipulation elsewhere, some unconnected with events in France and Flanders, and focusing less on combatants than on civilians, administrators and politicians.

Languages at the Front

Krista Cowman's paper notes that, as regards their changing linguistic environment, the starting point for some soldiers was being exposed to the difference between French and English. The British Expeditionary

Force in France was ill equipped to manage this situation. Phrasebooks provided a language which was both selected and predictive, relating to the ultimate predictive language of the Field Service Postcard, which itself reflected the predictive parameters in soldiers' postcards home, set both by concerns over censorship and by the soldiers' own sensibilities and emotional protection of loved ones. Cowman points out that phrasebooks appeared partially within the paradigm of health and safety; sometimes this was explicit, as in the case of *Sprechen Sie Deutsch and Parley Voo!* (1917), which carried advertisements for soldiers' dental care products.[1] Despite the obvious and growing importance of phrasebooks for the British soldier operating abroad, there was little development from the 'traveller's guide' model. The *Automatic-Interpreter*, published in France in 1918 'for the ... British Soldier in France with the Allies, in Germany in Case of Captivity', offered a list of parts of the body as locations of wounds that matches the pattern of requests elsewhere to purchase a mirror, a rug or a pair of slippers. It is difficult not to read as poignant naivety the final exchange in the 1914 *How to Say it in French* phrasebook (see Figure 0.1).

In soldiers' slang glossaries unintentional humour was inevitable. Everyday war experiences were not that much of an ongoing divertissement – quite the contrary; but boredom, apparently futile routine and petty officialdom have long provided ground for humour in the military experience, as evidenced in countless trench journals. This is confirmed by Julie Coleman:

> Humour isn't just for light-hearted entertainment, though. It can be used to avoid confronting unpleasant realities, and many dictionaries of the slang of soldiers serving in the First World War favoured misdefinition as a way of making light of inhuman conditions and incompetent or incomprehensible bureaucracy. (Coleman 2008: 11)

Occasional glossaries in trench journals indicate the idea of the foreign language as inherently funny (e.g. the *Fifth Glo'ster Gazette*, July 1918, provides a joke glossary of Italian). The overarching question here is: how did the soldier deal with foreign languages? For British soldiers reactions were guided by experience, and by social class. How did the school teaching of French in Britain, for example, or the provider of phrasebooks, shape as much as reflect attitudes? Noticeable about the *Chinese Note Book for C.L.C. [Chinese Labour Corps] Officers*,[2] for example, is that it is designed for the corps' British and French officers to speak

French.	English.	Pronunciation.
Vous êtes de bonne heure	You are early	Voos ate deh bonn urr.
Il est étranger	He is a foreigner	Eel ate a-trong-jay.
Parlez-vous français ?	Do you speak French ?	Parlay voo frongsay ?
Non, pas du tout	No, not at all	Nong pah du too.
Quel dommage	What a pity	Kell domahj.
Quel malheur	Bad luck	Kel mal-urr.
Quelle bonne chance	Good luck	Kel bonn shonse.
Je crois que oui	I think so	Jeh krwah keh we.
Je crois que non	I do not think so	Jeh krwah keh nong.
Savez-vous monter à bicyclette ?	Can you ride a bicycle ?	Savvay voo montay ah beeseeclett ?
Les journaux Anglais	English newspapers	Lay joor-no Onglay.
Comment allez-vous ?	How are you ?	Kommont allay voo ?
Quel est votre nom ?	What is your name ?	Kel a votr nom ?
Je m'appelle	I am called	Jeh map-pell.
Où sont les Anglais ?	Where are the English ?	Ooh song lays Onglay ?
Voilà	There	Voy lah.
Est-ce loin	Is it far	Ace lowahn.
Tout près	Quite near	Too pray.
Au plus tôt	As soon as possible	Oh plu toh.
Qu'est-ce que vous voulez ?	What do you want ?	Kess keh voo vooley ?
Espérons que la paix sera bientôt dèclarée	Let us hope peace will soon be declared	Espairong keh lah pay serrah beangtoh dayklarray.
Courage	Cheer up	Koorahj.

Notes on pronunciation.

Pronounce " j " like " s " in vision.
When " g " is at the end of a word pronounce it very slightly.
Pronounce " a " and " e " when alone like the English letters.
Pronounce " un " like " un " in hung without the " h " and " g."
Pronounce " une " like " une " in tune without the " t."

Figure 0.1 Page from *How to Say it in French* (Bristol, 1914)

to the Chinese labourers, but barely caters for any need to understand what was being said in the other direction (see Figure 0.2).

The need to manage foreign languages was a matter of both safety and political expediency. Within the Austro-Hungarian armies, as shown by Tamara Scheer's essay, tactical caution was needed in the management of language; particular languages among the more than a dozen in use could carry connotations of disloyalty or separatism, yet all carried official approval. The model of diglossia-convergence can be seen in two variations of English apparent at the time, military slang and standard English, brought together in the expectation of civilians to be conversant with soldiers' slang. Witness to that are the frequent jokes in *Punch* pointing out the mistakes of those who got slang wrong, usually elderly women. Lynda Mugglestone gives the example of Andrew Clark's awareness of 'war enthusiasm' expressed in, for example, the appropriation into female fashion of military 'accessories'. Parallel to this can be seen a divergence, most often seen in the growing distance between soldier and civilian, deriving largely from the wholly disparate experiences of life and death. Koenraad Du Pont's essay points out how this divergence was used in an Italian trench journal as a morale booster.

Amid the military chaos that was the First World War and among its linguistic representation stand the interpreter and the censor, whose jobs as much as anything were to read between the lines for indicators of morale. The need for interpreters was acknowledged and called for by Jeroom Leuridan (see Marnix Beyen's essay), within a diglossal single political unit, the Belgian army, where French was used by the officer class, and Flemish was largely used by rank-and-file soldiers from Flanders. Sandrijn Van Den Noortgate's essay shows how the role of the interpreter was key in the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. For those who took on the role of interpreting, there was a context which ranged from 'having a go', outrageous expectations, suspicion and resentment to appreciation, applause and a place in the vanguard of the professionalization of the role.

When it was decided that certain French and Japanese amendments to the Covenant of the League of Nations should be withdrawn, President Wilson of the United States addressed the League and congratulated it on its constitution. However, in the words of *The Times* of 29 April 1919, the senior Japanese delegate, Baron Makino, expressed his concern and regret in that Wilson's speech had not been translated, the first time any delegate at the conference had overlooked that formality. The *Dundee Courier* of the same day was slightly less reserved in its reporting on the matter and headlined that Japan warned the Allies of a danger of 'racial

CHINESE

NOTE BOOK

FOR

C.L.C. OFFICERS

Giving a few Military, Drill, and

Technical Expressions and a few

Sentences considered useful in France.

Printed at The Weihaiwei Mission Press, Liukungtao.

PART I.

Attention	立正	Li cheng
Right turn	向右轉	Hsiang yu⁴ chuan
Left turn	向左轉	Hsiang tso³ chuan
About turn	向後轉	Hsiang hou⁴ chuan
Fall in	排好	P'ai hao
Right dress	向右看齊	Hsiang yu⁴ k'an ch'i²
Left dress	向左看齊	Hsiang tso⁸ k'an ch'i²
Form two deep	成兩路	Ch'eng liang lu
Form fours	成四路	Ch'eng⁴ sou⁴ lu
Quick march	開步走	K'ai pu tsou³
Mark time	打腳	Ta chiao
Quick mark time	快打腳	K'uai⁴ ta chiao
Halt	立定	Li ting⁴
Stand at ease	稍息	Shao hsi²
Dismiss	散隊	San tui
Salute	施藏	Shih li
*Company 大隊 一排		Ta tui or p'ai
Platoon 小排		Hsiao p'ai
Section 棚		P'eng
*Captain 隊長 Coy. Comdr.		Tui chang³
Lieutenant		
Quartermaster 糧台官		Liang t'ai kuan
Adjutant 上軍官		Shang chün kuan

*British N.C.O.s	英國工頭	Ying¹ kuo kung t'ou²
*British Sergeant Major	英國總工頭	Ying¹ kuo tsung³ kung t'ou²
*British Sergeant	英國三道兒	Ying¹ kuo san tao⁴ erh
*British Corporal	英國兩道兒	Ying¹ kuo liang⁸ tao⁴ erh
*British Lance Corporal	英國一道兒	Ying¹ kuo¹ tao erh
*Chinese Gangers	工頭	Kung t'ou²
*Chinese Head Ganger	總工頭	Tsung³ kung t'ou²
*1st Class Chinese Ganger	中國三道兒	Chung¹ kuo san³ tao erh
*2nd Class Chinese Ganger	中國兩道兒	Chung¹ kuo liang³ tao erh
*3rd Class Chinese Ganger	中國一道兒	Chung¹ kuo i² tao erh
*Interpreter	經譯	Fan i (or T'ung shih)
*Chinese Dressers	看護	K'an hu
Sanitary coolies	衛生夫	Wei⁴ sheng fu¹
What is your number?	你是多少號	Ni shih to¹ shuo hao⁴
No. 1	一號	I hao⁴
" 2	二 "	Erh hao⁴
" 3	三 "	San hao⁴
" 4	四 "	Ssu hao⁴
" 5	五 "	Wu hao⁴
" 6	六 "	Liu hao⁴
" 7	七 "	Ch'i hao⁴
" 8	八 "	Pa hao⁴
" 9	九 "	Chiu hao⁴
" 10	十 "	Shih hao⁴

Figure 0.2 Pages from an English–Chinese phrasebook prepared for officers of the Chinese Labour Corps (Liugkungtao, n.d.)

difficulties'. Peculiarly, this post-war insular event of unwillingness or deliberate forgetfulness was representative of a similar absence of linguistic support throughout the war.

Those British soldiers who were limited to 'bad French' were often at the receiving end of an unwillingness by the British army to provide facilities for soldiers to learn French. While soldiers expressed a sense of incompetence in not being able to speak French, there was no apparent improvement during the conflict in training soldiers to speak French. This was partly because of the high death-rate among junior officers, who would have been those most intellectually equipped to learn a foreign language. Slowly a sense of creative resignation took the place of shame (Heimburger 2014).

While the experience of new soldiers coming into an existing army was partly one of colloquial language learning – learning the 'bad Hindi' of 'cushy', 'blighty' and so on – the experience of soldiering also involved developing a language of the experience of war. There is little surprise then that there should be so many parallels between German, French and English slang. But what those parallels, and differences, are tells us a lot about the details of experience, expectation, shared cultures and divergent aspirations, concepts examined in the essay by Peter Doyle and Robin Schäfer. Equally there were situations where lexis could become battleground and weapon. One of the mostly deeply felt terms in German military culture was and remains *Kamerad*, subject of the heartfelt soldiers' song 'Ich hatte einen Kameraden'; used to defuse tension while surrendering, it was quickly appropriated by Anglophone troops as a mocking verb meaning 'to surrender', and later trivialized on the home front (see Figure 0.3).

The expression of the colonial experience is the subject of Richard S. Fogarty's essay on the simplified French taught to French officers to use to French colonial troops, a version of the language of a complexity comparable to the 'correct' French which had been geopolitically pitched as the ideal language for liberal republicanism. Standard French may have been clearly ideal for culture, and the dissemination of French clearly part of the colonial imperative to 'civilize' the world, but in pragmatic terms it was not given to the 'other'. The position of 'standard' French may be linked to the promotion of standard Italian in *L'Astico*, described in the essay by Koenraad Du Pont; the war provided a field for linguistic political manipulation within languages.

Odile Roynette in *Languages and the First World War: Representation and Memory* points out that the vigorous investigation by Albert Dauzat and Gaston Esnault of the French used within the French army sought

Figure 0.3 British postcard, c.1915

to underline the strength of the language. But while such a 'strong' language might be a gift to the colonized it was not deemed appropriate to be fully given over to colonial troops on French soil; rather, standard French was made to fit the perceptions of the structure of indigenous African languages – the perceptions of language structure, that is, in so far as they fitted European preconceptions of language structure.

Code-switching runs throughout the essays in this section: code-switching for communication, for group-identity creation, as a reflection of political expediency. Sometimes it gave rise to bonding, sometimes to incomprehensibility and sometimes to resentment. Certainly during the period of the conflict the mixing of people in terms of class and geographic or linguistic place of origin led to code-switching, as both a required and an adopted practice, becoming a common linguistic experience.

Writing Home

Letter writing provided soldiers with an opportunity to create a sense of home. 'Writing Home' portrays a theme of manipulation, by both the individual and the state, as Indian soldiers found ways of using the wealth of their own culture to bypass the censor's gaze, a scenario explored in Hilary Footitt's essay. The same desire to communicate in a family's first language underlay the problems of soldiers wanting to write home in Welsh, which Ifor ap Glyn examines. From the other direction, Koenraad Du Pont looks at how the Italian army staff attempted to manipulate the language of the trench journal both to raise morale and to cement a heterogeneous army, characterized by several dialects.

While Indian soldiers used the literary traditions of their own languages to send coded messages to their families to indicate where they were serving, so Welsh soldiers used the rich tradition of the Bible to do the same (see Figure 0.4).[3] Language here is proposed as a tool for simultaneous communicating and concealing, in which the demands of family can be met by the use of a linguistic tradition deeper than the exigencies of twentieth-century patriotism.

Important here too is the structure of status relationships between languages, lexis within languages, dialects, accents, even word order. Throughout this volume and its companion volume, *Languages and the First World War: Representation and Memory*, there are frequent incidences of status differences between dialects and languages, and between individual terms whose use acts as markers of social status. The ranking of languages as a symptom of class structures in a multilingual state allows the comparison of class-based structures of language to be made across several language groups involved in the war. The comparisons include:

Standard – slang
Trench slang – criminal underclass slang
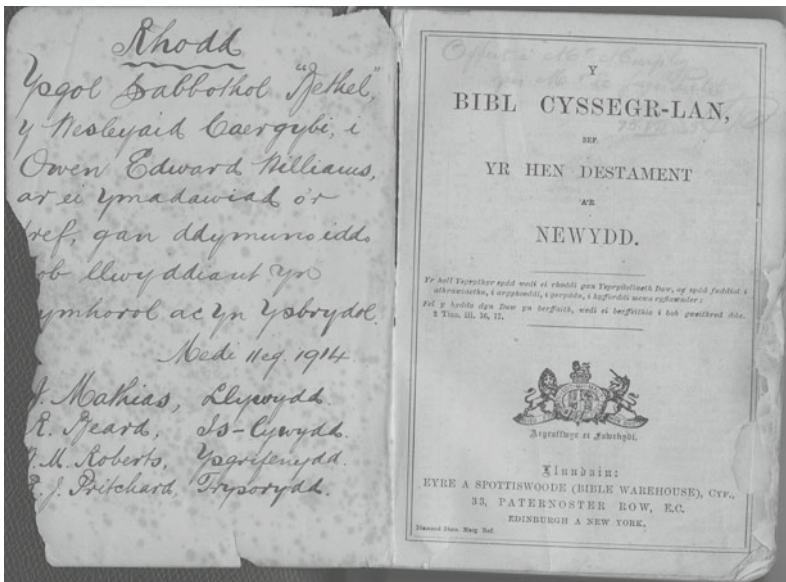
Figure 0.4 Y Bibl: Welsh Bible, given to nineteen-year-old Owen Edward Williams upon his departure to the front in September 1914 by Wesleyan Sunday School Bethel in Holyhead. The Bible was found on the body of his seventeen-year-old friend and neighbour Owen John Owen when he was killed near Ypres on 4 May 1915, and the item later entered the collection of In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres – a rare object testifying to the use of Welsh at the front.

English – Welsh
French – Flemish
English – Italian – Maltese
Standard Italian – Italian dialects
Standard French – petit Français – Occitan – Breton
English – Indian languages
German – other languages in the Habsburg armies

In extremis the war provided a catalyst for different degrees and kinds of perceived cultural and/or political suppression (e.g. of Czech, Breton, Welsh and Flemish). The political results were seen most in the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, splitting along linguistic lines, the kind of structure proposed after the war by Jeroom Leuridan (see Marnix Beyen's essay).

The language of the perception of race during the war is touched on in a number of essays in this collection, Marnix Beyen's and Gavin Bowd's essays referring to linguistically ascertained 'racial' groupings within Europe and Richard S. Fogarty's highlighting perceptions of race in the encounter between Africans and Europeans. In many cases the terms were ready before the war for application as propaganda weapons; the perceptions justified by pseudo-science, etymology and outright prejudice took various forms.

The mindset of prejudice, encouraged by propaganda motives, quickly determined that racial stereotypes within Europe, its colonies and the United States could explain certain motives. An article in the *Birmingham Gazette* of 12 October 1915 described 'the mechanical drill system of the Teutonic race'. The Teutonic 'race' was typified in France and Britain as barbaric, naturally militaristic and highly self-organizing.

> During the first phase of the war the British press accused the Germans of barbaric cruelty to their prisoners and to wounded opponents. Not for one moment did I believe these reports but for the sake of the Teutonic race I wanted to uproot this calumny and to bring to light the truth. (Hedin 1915: 30)

The German High Command's reluctance to use pejorative terms in the prosecution of the war, at least against British soldiers, was guided by article 22 of the Hague Convention of 1907 respecting the Wars and Customs of War on Land; the highest German censorship authority pointed out:

> Die Sprache gegenüber den uns feindlichen Staaten kann hart sein. Eine beschimpfende, den Gegner unterschätzende Tonart aber ist kein Zeichen von Kraft. Die Reinheit und Größe der Bewegung, die unser Volk erfaßt hat, erfordert eine würdige Sprache.[4]

> (The language we employ towards our enemies may be harsh. However, a tone that insults and underestimates the enemy is not a sign of power. The purity and greatness of the movement that has seized our people requires a dignified language.)

Equally, in the early months of the war the German military mission was underlined by attempts to treat the enemy with dignity. A postcard showing a German soldier spanking a Scottish soldier was typical of those discouraged by military censors (see Ulrich and Ziemann 2010,

facing p. 85). But this is within a context of the European armies. As regards troops from outside Europe, racial discourse was highly evident in the German lexis: on 6 October 1914 the crown prince wrote to the Kaiser that 'Britain had set the Japanese and half-wild Indian hordes at our throats' (Rohl 2014: 1146).

Germans were widely shown and described as overweight and wearing glasses (Doyle and Walker 2012: 26), the second of these being a character trait supposedly shared with 'conchies'.[5] A contributor to the trench journal *The Grey Brigade* (20 November 1915) described the taking of a group of German prisoners, 'many with glasses', and the *Daily Express* ran a regular column entitled 'Through German Spectacles'. Various racial epithets, some based on physical characteristics, were directed at the Germans by the British, such as 'squarehead', 'Hun' and 'Boche'.[6]

The term 'squarehead' was being applied to Germans in America before the end of the nineteenth century, and in Britain it was pre-war slang for 'German sailors. Fraser and Gibbons give the following for 'squarehead':

> A German. In its origin an old seafarer's term, suggested probably by the somewhat square shape of the typical Teutonic skull. The close-cropped hair of the German soldier on active service, noticed among prisoners, accentuated the idea of squareness, and gave the term currency at the Front in the War. The Squarehead or Nordic type of skull (*brachy-cephalic*) is a recognised form in anthropology, in contradistinction to the Longhead (*dolicho-cephalic*) type. Says a British authority on the subject: 'A very big proportion of the German people are Squareheads. The Saxons are nearly always Nordic, and a quite large proportion of the Prussian aristocracy also. These distinctions as they bear on the habits of the racial types have a bearing also on the callings they choose and the effects of those callings on physique and long life. The great majority of the police are of the Nordic type: so are soldiers and sailors. The Squarehead is almost extinct in these islands. Perhaps, very roughly, one person in 10,000 is an English Squarehead. But it is a very interesting fact that our murderers, in the majority of cases, are square-headed; and in the United States the proportion of murderers of the square-headed type is extraordinarily high.' (Fraser and Gibbons 1925: 268)

Fraser and Gibbons do not name their source, but this is typical of much racial anthropometry of the time. It is worth noting that Fraser and Gibbons's definition makes no mention of the shape of the German

Stahlhelm, whose square outline was thought by some to be the origin of the term. There may have been a reinforcement of the term once the steel helmet came into use.

The term 'Hun' came into use in Britain only gradually during 1914 after the declaration of war, developing from the clumsy pun 'Germ-Hun'. It was there waiting to be used, thanks to Kaiser Wilhelm's injunction to his troops at Bremerhaven on 27 July 1900:

> Just as a thousand years ago the Huns under their King Attila made a name for themselves, one that even today makes them seem mighty in history and legend, may the name German be affirmed by you in such a way in China that no Chinese will ever again dare to look cross-eyed at a German.

But there are indications that its use as a racial epithet was questioned: 'Are the Germans really Huns?' asked a contributor to the *Pow-Wow* trench journal on 9 December 1914.

Less questioned among the British was the term 'Boche', picked up from the French; debate continues as to the origin of this word, but clearly it was deeply disliked by the Germans. Much has been written about the term 'Boche'; at this stage it seems likely that a range of sources combined with a strong sound, giving a word which expressed aggression and contempt.[7] Possibly these sound qualities assisted its application in the phrase 'les Boches du Nord', used within France to describe refugees from the invaded territories and the war zone. The use of the word 'Boche' by French people towards French refugees within France is documented from the autumn of 1915 (Nivet 2004: 377) and was strenuously protested against by those responsible for the care of refugees. Philippe Nivet points out that use of the term 'Boches du Nord' was not limited to areas far from the fighting, and was, unsurprisingly, used by children against refugee children in school (Nivet 2004: 379); partially it may have been indicative of north–south antagonism in France – Nivet quotes a letter that states, 'Nous entendons dire fréquemment: dans le Nord, c'était tous Boches' (Nivet 2004: 379). Nivet finds various interpretations of the phrase unsatisfactory (Nivet 2004: 385); there was a linguistic difference between the north and the south (Winter (1996: 233) points out that many French soldiers spoke Occitan rather than standard French), but the term 'Boche du Nord' was used in areas closer to the front, where there was no linguistic difference between residents and French refugees. The refugees concerned were French internally displaced persons, which is problematic because there were

also Francophone and bilingual Belgian refugees, who were clearly not looked at in the same way.

> Ne doit-on pas alors prendre l'expression de 'Boches du Nord' au pied de la lettre? Elle renverrait alors à la conviction d'une 'impureté' biologique de certains réfugiés, alors que la guerre est conçue comme une lutte entre deux 'races' opposées. [Footnote supplied in the text: Voir notamment le texte du docteur Edgar Bérillon, 'La Psychologie de la race allemande d'après ses caractères objectifs et spécifiques', conférence du 4 février 1917, *Association française pour l'avancement des sciences*, Masson, 1917.] (Nivet 2004: 385)

> (Must we not then take the expression 'Boches du Nord' literally? It reflects thus the conviction that there was a biological 'impurity' in some refugees, and that the war was basically a fight between two opposing races.)

Nivet's proposal is that there was an underlying prejudice that the invasion had taken over not just the lands and culture of the French refugees but their bodies too, altering more than the culture and the land. The implication of this reading is that the racial identity of the people themselves had been altered, and the refugees had become racially 'tainted'. The term 'Boche' equally was hated by the German soldiers and the German people in general. Dauzat (1918: 53) quotes *Der Feldgraue Büchmann* of 1916:

> ... le vocable boche désigne un être aux penchants les plus bas et les plus méprisables qui puissent s'imaginer, un être bien au-dessous des nègres et même inférieur aux bêtes.

> (The word 'Boche' described a being of instincts more base and contemptible than you can imagine, a creature below the blacks and even inferior to beasts.)

For Dauzat 'Boche' described 'ne ... pas une nationalité, mais un peuple, une race, avec le nuance péjorative sous laquelle la foule voit l'étranger, ennemi ou non' (Dauzat 1918: 59) ('not just a people, a race, with the pejorative nuance with which the mob views "the other", enemy or not'). Dauzat sees the word as the perfect response to the German term 'Welsch', meaning 'foreigner, generally from southern Europe', applied contemptuously to 'les gens de race latine. La guerre actuelle est la lutte des Welsches contre les Boches' (Dauzat 1918: 59).

'Welsch', cognate with the English 'Welsh', combines generalized and specific descriptions of 'foreigner' and 'Romance language-speaking': *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Grimm and Grimm 1852) gives 'romanisch, italienisch, französisch'.

Usage of a further term, 'L'Union Latine', awaits more research (see Figure 0.5). There is perhaps an echo from the 'Union Latine' of the previous century, a monetary contract between France, Italy, Greece, Switzerland and Belgium, based on equal ratios of gold and silver in the currency (1865–1914); but there is little evidence for successful attempts to transfer this into a racial grouping that would embrace the Sicilian conscript and the Belgian refugee.[8]

Examination of the linguistic changes among smaller communities can show parallels or differences in comparison to better-known situations; political and military developments and meetings between languages resulting in language change occurred throughout the war. Hillary Briffa's essay on Malta explores how the war acted as a catalyst in the striving to define national identity through language, and invites comparison with Miloš Damjanović's essay on the striving to maintain community identity and language among the Jews of Kosovo-Metohija (see *Languages and the First World War: Representation and Memory*).

Divisions through language in many cases highlight social divisions within a single nation or empire. Ifor ap Glyn's paper links particularly to papers by Karen Shelby and Hilary Footitt. As Welsh was perceived rightly or wrongly to be a suppressed language, its status echoed that of Flemish. Both Flemish and Welsh were seen as 'inferior' languages within a status relationship with, respectively, French and English. Ifor ap Glyn quotes a letter which begins 'If Welsh blood is good enough to be spilt ...', which corresponds uncannily with the Flemish 'Here is our blood. When are our rights?' (see Karen Shelby's essay in *Languages and the First World War: Representation and Memory*).

In many cases splits in language occur along class lines, the officer class using a standard form as regards either choice of language or register; this was more prevalent at the beginning of the war, the vulnerability of junior officers leading to a wider social mix later on, and to the development of such accommodations as 'temporary gentlemen' in the British army. It is clearly present in the language division in the Belgian army, and in the general use of German for officers across the Austro-Hungarian armies. The status difference between soldiers and officers is seen in English in the rather dismissive term 'other ranks' for non-commissioned officers and men. Jay Winter notes (Winter 1996: 212) that while other ranks in the British army suffered from 'shell-shock',

Figure 0.5 French postcard, c.1915

officers were diagnosed as having 'neurosthenia'. Robert Hampson points out the use of French and Latin as markers of class in *Parade's End* (see *Languages and the First World War: Representation and Memory*). The theme of the relationships between languages leads strongly into, and has themes in common with, the third section, 'The Home Front'.

The Home Front

'The Home Front' brings together a consideration of how the war was mediated through managed language. This management happened as both micro- and macro-management: the self-censorship applied by soldiers in the field, but also the management of language in the procedures and developments of imposing or encouraging one language over another. Gavin Bowd highlights the French use of 'ILS' to signify the Germans in occupied France. Though they might be 'not always bad men', the deliberate non-use of their name both avoids provocation and takes away some of their materiality. Complex relationships between languages are seen also in Hillary Briffa's essay, where there are class, colonial and nationalist issues involved; uncomfortably one language is set against another within the same geopolitical camp, while the language of aspirant political self-representation is marginalized in the larger question of the prosecution of the war.

In the case of the German occupation of Flanders the idea of a 'patron language and culture' emerged, as shown in essays by Gavin Bowd and Marnix Beyen, where political Germanization involved the drawing of Flemish closer to German, through education and publishing, and through the manipulation of racial tension. The process of cultural enforcement included the declarations of dubious etymologies linking French with German, and here we see declarations of race being made through linguistic manipulation. The enforcement of Flemish in occupied Belgium was a pragmatic choice, with the unlikely goal of replacing French with German. Ulrich Tiedau has pointed out that the method of achieving this might be very small, but very important, such as indicating the name 'Vlaanderen' as 'VL' ('German') rather than 'FL' ('French'). As a political football Flemish was a victim on both sides of no man's land (Tiedau 2014). Such cultural and political pressure was sometimes described as 'boching', using the root word described above.

In prisoner-of-war camps in Germany, people from Flanders were separated from people from Wallonia. Enforced separation of communities happened in occupied Belgium as well, where Moritz von