

Have any of you visited another English speaking country, like the US? They speak English, but slightly differently from out here. For example, if you go to Maccas and ask for chips in the US, you'll get potato chips, not the deep fried strips of potato you call chips. You have to ask for fries. And when you come back to Australia after a long trip there, you might accidentally go to Macca's and ask for fries. You'd laugh it off and correct yourself, no harm done, right? But imagine that people who heard your slip up did think it made you bad person. The coworker you came with is so shocked by your choice of words that they spread rumors about you at work. In fact, the only place you can find work any longer is that same Maccas.

It sounds ridiculous, right? But this is exactly what life has been like for many Chinese since the rise to power of the Chinese Communist Party. Through their propaganda organs, such as the newspapers and television, *the Communists politicized Chinese vocabulary* so that the words people say show whether or not the speaker supports the Party's program. Those who learn to say the approved words, like 'Socialism with Chinese Characteristics,' are allowed to take part in the economic boom that has been reform era China, while those who accidentally say fries are stuck working in much worse places than Maccas.

My goal is to understand where this system came from and how it works. Taking the propaganda on the 1911 Revolution as an example, I hope to *identify how the Party uses history to give words a political meaning, what that political meaning is, and why those words show one's loyalty to the party*. Understanding why people can't say fries lets us know how the party defines citizenship and chineseness.

This area is all the more important to understand because *without a guiding ideology, and with economic problems mounting, maintaining the political content of vocabulary is among the few institutions keeping the party together. By understanding this aspect of their reign, we understand the Party, its evolution, and its hold on power. And revealing to Chinese how this system works and legitimizes the party may even help break its hold on people, and move China towards a time where you can order fries without worrying what else it means.*