The basic unit of the Chinese language is the zi (字), i.e. a Chinese word. Each zi has a written form (called a character, made up of strokes), a sound (made up of consonant and vowel) and a meaning (or multiple meanings). When we speak or write Chinese, we string zi together to form terms, phrases and sentences.

派 (verb) means send. 派 (noun) = 流派 (liu pai = flow-branch) means branch/school/attitude/style.

浪漫派 (lang man pai = romantic-branch) = romanticism. 穩健派 (wen jian pai = steady-healthy-branch) means solid, steady people. 派系 (pai xi = branch-system) and 黨派 (dang pai = party-branch) are political/social factions.

派 (pai) (Putonghua, 4th tone), paai (Cantonese 3rd tone)
Basic meaning: branch, school, style

This week: Words about martial arts

武術 (wu shu = martial-method) means martial arts. 武林 (wu lin = martial-forest) means the world of martial arts practitioners and activities. 武林派別 (wu lin pai bie = martial-forest-branch-difference) means different martial arts schools, e.g. 少林派 (Shao Lin pai = the Shaolin School, Buddhist monks), 武當派 (Wu Dang pai = the Wudang School, Taoists), 峨眉派 (E Mei pai = the Emei School, Buddhist nuns).

by Diana Yue