

How the Malaysian Chinese View Their Malay Counterparts: A Version of Accepting Others

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Abstract

A change in the political landscape of Malaysia has been emerging in a gradual manner, for the past few months, since the new premiership in March, 2009. After more than 51 years of independence, it became apparent that the ruling Malaysian government, *Barisan Nasional*, is not taking things in this country for granted. A number of things can be attributed to this change. First, it was the taking over of five (since 2009) Malaysian states by the opposition party, *Pakatan Keadilan Rakyat* (PKR) after the March 8, 2009 election. The states of Selangor, Kedah, Pulau Pinang, Kelantan, and until recently, Perak, are now under the opposition's rule. The March 8 election of 2009 was one of the major events to have occurred and changed the way politics had been viewed in the country. Evidence points to the Malaysian people's frustrations in the way the country had been progressing (or deteriorating). The current Prime Minister, Datuk Najib Abdul Razak, has held office for more than 100 days and even he has developed a tagline: 1Malaysia for the benefit of gaining back the people's trust. The tagline is seen by many as an endeavour to integrate the nation of multiethnic groups as one nation. Of the multiethnic communities, Malaysian Chinese people are second largest in number, after the Malays. They make up 25% of the 27 million people in this country (The Star 27 July, 2008). Throughout the last five decades, there have been various views passed by the Malaysian Chinese about the Malays. However, with the current change in politics, this exploratory study is conducted to gauge the Malaysian Chinese and their views about their Malay counterparts. Using the ethnographic approach (Hymes, 1963; Spradley, 1979) which focuses on 24 male and female participants who are interviewed via a set of structured interview questions, oral responses of 24 Malaysian Chinese subjects between the ages of 20 and 60 are then tape or manually recorded, depending on consent given. Data was then transcribed into Roman alphabet letters as words and discourse analysis was then used to analyse the linguistic data. Analysis suggests that the Malaysian Chinese participants perceive their Malay counterparts in various degrees on a continuum of very positive to negative.

Introduction

It is natural for the government of a multicultural, multiethnic and multilingual country like Malaysia to ensure that some form of tolerance level is existing among its multiethnic communities so as to avoid racial disharmony. Tolerance is an important aspect of a diverse and plural community for it not only enables different ethnic groups to co-exist with each other harmoniously, it also enriches a country in various forms such as political stability, strong economy, racial harmony, and many more benefits, all of which can bring a nation to great heights.

Most people view the word 'tolerance' in a negative way, assuming that it means withholding from one's natural way of belief so as to 'accommodate another ethnic group's way of life'. In contrast, the New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language (1996:1320) defines 'tolerance' as 'freedom from bigotry or from racial or religious prejudice'. The Collins Paperback Thesaurus (2001) likewise, provides synonyms that can substitute the word 'tolerance' and they include 'broad-mindedness, open mindedness' and 'endurance'. Thus, it can be seen that 'tolerance' has meanings which are positively inclined although most people often perceive it as a negative word.

As a country of mixed cultures, Malaysia is also multilingual, multireligious and multicoloured (skin), with at least three dominant ethnic communities living side by side. Within this colourful landscape live other minority groups like the Vietnamese, Myanmars, Filipinos, Bangladeshis, Europeans and West Asians. This makes Malaysia home, whether temporary or permanent, for the various dominant and minority ethnic groups. Of all its diversities, it is how the various dominant groups live together in 'harmony' that amazes foreigners.

Aim

This is an exploratory study of 24 Malaysian Chinese male and female participants who are interviewed. Focussing on the linguistic contents of their oral responses, this study aims to identify the perceptions these Malaysian Chinese have of their Malay counterparts. The study hypothesises that the participants have more positive views to share than negative ones.

Methodology

Using the ethnographic approach proposed by Hymes (1963) and finetuned by Spradley (1979), 24 Malaysian Chinese between the ages of 20 and 60 were identified. Selection of participants were based on the researcher's contacts and extended contacts (other friends' contacts) as many people avoided talking about such topics due to personal misconceptions. Appointments were set up and interviews were then held either in the home setting or in public coffee shops. The purpose was to maintain a relaxed atmosphere and to alleviate a feeling of threat and insecurity. The interview questions range from:

- 1) Do you have many Malay friends/ classmates / workers / colleagues / neighbours?
- 2) How long have you known them?
- 3) Do you like the Malays whom you come into contact with throughout your schooling days and at work?
- 4) How would you describe your relationship with them? For example do you find them very friendly, very helpful, very polite, very honest, very sincere, very hardworking or very easy to work with?

At the end of the interview, a small token of appreciation was given. Prior to the study, participants were told that a study is being conducted to identify their viewpoints on Malays. Participants were then asked for their consent in recording the data. Individual face-to-face interviews were conducted and a set of structured questions (as above) were used to draw out responses. Some responses were tape recorded and some were manually recorded, based on the choice of the participants. These were then transcribed word for word using Roman alphabet letters. Minor non-verbal movements were noted but the details were omitted due to time constraint. Where the language is not English, direct translations of English are provided. Due to space, only portions of those which are relevant to this study are used for analysis. Discourse Analysis was then used to analyse data. Analysis focused on the choice of words used in the utterances and the meanings evoked from the usage.

The Ethnographic Approach

The American Webster's dictionary defines ethnographic as 'the study and systematic recording of human cultures' which usually focuses on how human participants interact among themselves within a certain environment. Hymes (1963) says that there are many factors to consider in an ethnographic approach which encompasses speech events and variables of speech factors

and may even include looking at linguistic contents of the data. However, Hymes claims that he has no structural framework which one can work on in looking at linguistic data.

Spradley (1979) mentions that there are five steps in ethnographic research. These include 1)selecting the problem, 2)collecting data, 3)analyzing data, 4)formulating hypothese, and 5)writing. Spradley believes that ethnographic analysis hinges on the point where a researcher looks for meanings which participants make of their lives via symbols like words and non-verbal cues. In looking at the interview component, Spradley's focus is on the spoken words as he believes that they represent some kind of meaning for the individual.

Another person who focuses on spoken language was Labov (1972) whose theory on narrative structure indicates that language and its structure can be viewed in terms of :

- a) abstract (signals that a story is about to begin)
- b) orientation, (context of story)
- c) action (climax of the story)
- d) resolution (conclusion of story)
- e) coda (signals end of story)
- f) evaluation (comments or gestures that run throughout the story to show how interesting it is)

All of these components are useful framework for evaluating oral stories but in the context of this study which looks at the responses of interviewees, data will only be analysed for the linguistic contents which encompass c)action and d)resolution.

Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis (DA) is sometimes mentioned as discourse studies both of which are used as a general term for a number of approaches in analysing written, spoken or signed language use. Although the objects of discourse analysis may encompass both written and spoken text, it would normally take into account coherent sequences of the text such as sentence structure, speech acts or turn taking. Most discourse analysts also study language use beyond the sentence boundary by looking at naturally occurring (authentic) language use. Discourse analysis has been employed as an approach by a variety of

social science disciplines including linguistics, sociology, anthropology, social work, cognitive psychology, social psychology, international relations, human geography, communication studies and translation studies. Nevertheless, each of these disciplines is subject to its own assumptions, dimensions of analysis, and methodologies.

Zellig Harris (1952) looks at transformational grammar in the late 1930s where he links formal equivalence relations among the sentences of a coherent discourse explicitly by using sentence transformations which were then transformed into a canonical form. In this aspect, words and sentences with equivalent information would then surface in the same column of an array. Harris' work evolved to become a science that was occupied for sublanguage analysis (Kittredge & Lehrberger 1982) and eventually, it culminated to become the informational structures seen in texts of a sublanguage of science, immunology, (Harris et al. 1989) and later as a fully articulated theory of linguistic informational content (Harris, 1991).

Narrative Theory

The narrative theory argues that people produce accounts of themselves that are 'storied' (ie. they are in the form of stories/narratives) and that the social world is itself 'storied' (ie. 'public' stories circulated in popular culture, providing means which people can use to construct personal identities and personal narratives). Ricoeur argues that the narrative is a key means through which people produce an identity. Narratives link the past to the present, but often, there is no 'unbiased account of the past'. Narratives are characterised by the following elements:

- accounts which contain an element of transformation (ie. change over time),
- accounts containing some kind of action and characters
- accounts that are brought together in a plot line.

Narratives are said to have a temporal dimension and the characters and actions can be imaginary/fantasy. It has been suggested that the emplotment developed by the narrator serves as the process by which narratives are produced. Narratives contain many disparate elements that will combine to become a story, for instance, digressions, sub-plots and others. However, narratives must have a point for instance, 'so what?' factor thus, most narratives appear to contain a moral message.

The credibility of narratives

Narratives are reportable events but some narratives are voluntary accounts of events offered by the speaker willingly. In this case, the speaker's choice of words may be more natural, with no effort required to hide his/her emotions while narrating. Other types of narratives may need to be coerced out of the speakers, and where this occurs, the speakers may be hesitant about speaking. Narratives in this kind of environment may be more reticent, and speakers may choose to exercise some form of control either over their feelings or their choice words.

Like all reports, narratives are also subject to being reliable and credible. Norrick (2005) says that the concept of reliability and validity is relative to the situation. It may possibly depend on the rapport of the parties involved that is the relationship between narrator and audience. Labov reports that for a narrative to be successful, it must not only report reportable events but also prove to be credible. He suggests that there need to be an inverse relationship between reportability and credibility', saying that the more reportable the narrative is, the less credible it becomes. He also believes that the more objective the evaluation, the more credible the narrative although this may be dependent on what is being reported as personal experiences.

Narrative analysis

Narrative analysis is analysis of a chronologically told story, with a focus on how those 'spicy' elements of the story are pieced together, why some elements are evaluated differently from others, how the past experiences shaped the perceptions of the present, how the present shapes perceptions of the past, and how both shape perceptions of the future. Narrative analysis is seen as a more in-depth alternative to survey research. Some advocates see narratives as an empowering social science methodology as this approach allows participants the legitimate avenue to articulate their frustrations (mainly) through their personal viewpoints and evaluations of those elements narrated.

In the context of this study, it is necessary to introduce the theory of narratives as the responses of the conducted interview also came in the form of narratives which were extracted based on a set of structure interview questions.

Analysis of data

As mentioned in the section discussing the five components outlined by Labov, this study will only focus on the immediate contents of the responses. Thus there will be no focus given to the components leading to narratives, as described by Labov. Hence, the components of abstract or orientation of narratives are omitted. The contents of the elicited responses taken from the interviews will be treated as the components of action and resolution, both of which depict the story and attitude of the speakers concerned. By focusing on the forms of the linguistic data, analysis will thus be able to project the viewpoints of the participants. These are then translated as positive or negative, apparent illustrations of one's perceptions. Both the Positive and Negative views are derived from the speakers' choice of words which help to denote their attitudes that surfaced due to their past experiences. Both dimensions of viewpoints are then segregated according to the theme of the responses which are:

<p>Positive Views:</p> <p>a) The Good Samaritan</p> <hr/>	<p>Negative Views:</p> <p>a) The Borrower</p> <p>b) The <i>Rempit</i></p> <p>c) The Great Pretender</p> <p>d) The Sloth</p> <p>E) The Lopsided</p> <hr/>
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Positive Views

The Good Samaritan

Good Samaritans are those who come to our aid when we most need them and yet they are people whom we have no relationship with at all. It appears that the positive views expressed by the Malaysian Chinese participants were generally directed at people whom they do not really know personally. In the instance of the younger participants' responses, it appears that their perceived 'other' refer to their close friends or those whom they had worked with. The extracts below are given as examples.

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(S1)

<p>Chinese male developer (54)</p>	<p>Oh...I am very grateful to the Malays..especially the government servants...the teachers lah, lecturerslah... they were the ones who helped me during the recession in 1984 or sometime during the period.</p> <p>Nobody..at that time.. was buying my houses ...because..because everybody, like today, was hard pressed for money..the economy was so bad that I could have 'rolled my blanket'..declared bankruptcy.. if not for the Malay government servants who purchased my developed houses....</p> <p>They helped me to revive my business then and I will always be grateful.....</p>
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(S2)

<p>Chinese male businessman (57)</p>	<p>It is true that the Malays in our country are too laidback in their attitudes.... and it is because they are well looked after by the government... but I always feel that it is also this attitude that made me as a Chinese, more competitive....I had to always find ways to make myself more visible as a member of this community...that is why I am today a successful businessman, if not for them... I would not be so stable.</p>
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(S3)

<p>Chinese female professional (51)</p>	<p>The Chinese in this country...but some of them, the extreme ones...they can be really radical....so if the Malays seemed hard, it is because these radical Chinese group made them out to be...I don't really believe that the Malays are really bad...just different perhaps.</p>
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(S4)

<p>Chinese professional male accountant (57)</p>	<p>If you want to really know what the Malays are like, you have to really go and live in the kampong....</p> <p>They are really nice, friendly...kind and not show-offs, unlike some of our Chinese neighbours..ah...a little bit of money, children got good jobs..., wah. Show off like nobody's business....</p>
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(S5)

<p>Chinese Female academician (44)</p>	<p>The Malays? Well, most of my friends in my schooldays were mostly Malays because the Chinese didn't want to friend me....they were the rich kids..the Chinese kids I mean.. and the Malays were the poor kids like me, and I was poor so we all <i>enggang sama enggang</i> and <i>pipit</i></p>
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	<i>sama pipit</i> ... They were my friends..
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(S6)

Chinese Male hawker (39)	Actually the Malays are more honest than the Chinese, really...you go anywhere...ah...you can see that the Chinese will try to cheat..one you know. In market ah.. the Chinese housewives, ah...they <i>kecek</i> (cheat) a few strings of <i>kacang panjang</i> ...they put in extra okra beans into their basket when they buy vegetables from me... but the Malays <i>ah</i> ... they..not like that one <i>lah</i> ...they are more honest.. I think they believe in their God more..
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(S7)

Chinese Male Student (23)	Come on <i>lah</i> ,,,it is not a fair world..... the government needs to look after its own people right? So no big deal <i>lah</i> , if we Chinese are really so capable, then show, don't complain only....
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(S8)

Female student (21)	<p>I had a lot of fun with my Malay friends. We had a lot of hanging out and chill out..I've known them since primary school..everyone stick together since young...It's not to say that they are bad, they may act pariah but if you talk nicely to them, they will be nice ...must see how the bond goes among the races ..that is I am a Chinese in a Muhibbah class. I think how well you work with them depends on yourself, whether you wanna mix, be open or just stick to your own kind...</p> <p>Basically, its our mindset <i>lah</i>..like when I was in Form 2 and got whacked by a group of thugs first time <i>ah</i>.. and when I arrive in Samad (school) my own school <i>ah</i>, the Malays and Indians (classmates) ask me if I am ok and they say let's look for those who caused the problem...</p>
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(S9)

Chinese male student (24)	The Malays, <i>ah</i> ...hmmm..well you know in UK, somehow, they are there for you, when you have trouble.....my friends...Nick, Mickey.. they are all fake... when you need them they are never around when you needthem....but Ben and Ah long, they are my Malay friends... they were the ones who would come all the way from Shah Alam, when I need them.
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(S10)

Female Chinese student (21)	Yu de hao, yu terk hen gao tan play-play only, Hau xiang chai Penang terk sze hou...wor one Chinese her three Malay girls...Ta mern fu xiang pang mang, Yu toong si chainga, yi hi chor koong ker. (Some are good some are not so good like when in Penang, I was one Chinese girl with three Malay girls. They helped me and we could talk together and do assignments together.)
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Altogether, 10 participants out of 24 had made positive comments about their Malay counterparts. Of these, 6 were males and 4 were females. In addition, 6 of them were older participants aged between 30 to 60 while 4 were between 20 to 29. Hence, it can be said that older participants were more ‘tolerant’ and accepting than younger participants and that males were more positive than females.

Negative Views

This view can be classified into four categories according to the themes of the speaker’s experiences.

a)The Borrowers

In the past, local Malays were financially less capable than the Chinese. As many Chinese immigrants were doing business that catered to the needs of the local Malays, it was quite logical for the businessman to allow credit to the locals. Probably as a result of this stereotyping, Malaysian Chinese people have formed a skewed perception of the Malays as borrowers. This is quite clearly reflected in the following responses.

(S11)

Female business executive (27)	I don’t like them but i also don’t hate them...it is like u do your thing i do mine. Leave me alone and that shall be peace enough for me...i can exchange conversations but not to an extend where i wanna know them more than just a acquaintance or classmates. I would not wanna get involve with their personal life as well as their FINANCIAL LIFE!!....the reason i highlighted on it is i have an experience once when my classmate thought i am rich and have alot of cash with me all the time will start ask me out on dates and then eventually say he wants to buy this thing or that and if only he has the money to do this or
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	<p>that...when they attempt to ask money from u that time they are very down to earth and also take a big round to get what they wanted to say...but when u reject their offer the face would just turn from just having chocolate cake to uncook mango...<i>muka masam</i> (sour face) gila (mad) ...haih....so from then i think no need to get involve in their life so much or to get involve with that sort of people...</p>
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(S12)

<p>Female academician (58)</p>	<p>I wouldn't say they are bad. It is just that they are poor business people, not good at managing their finance ... Maybe that is why they prefer to work for the government..perhaps because work is less challenging, so no need to challenge their thinking skills. Like my husband's workers, hah, borrow money first is a habit... before end of the month, gaji sudah habis (salary is gone) all taken in advance first so by the end of the month, they will become extremely broke. I feel sorry but how to teach them?</p>
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(S13)

<p>Male Chinese worker (23)</p>	<p>Yau dit ok geh but yau dit hou hak yan chang... (some are alright but some you can really hate!)</p> <p>yao si hui dei mun ngor jeh cin geh si hao ngor wa mou (sometimes they may ask to borrow money from me and if I say I have no money...)</p> <p>hui dei dor dor yeh kongwah mm oi jeh dong mai kedekut (Then they will say a lot like wah..don't want to lend..very stingy!)</p> <p>den you dit leh yat yat mun lei je yat kao.... (then there are some who everyday will ask to borrow one dollar from you.)</p> <p>YAT YAT LEI JI MOU!!! (EVERYDAY YOU KNOW!)</p> <p>Li dit yan leh jan hai wan ngor pan...so after that ngor mou choi hui dei jor... (This type of people really take advantage of me so after that, I don't</p>
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	<p>want them to work anymore.)</p> <p>...yao dit Malayan hou cool geh...kong dak siu and hou dor hou geh idea...</p> <p>(Some Malays are very cool,, talk little and have many great ideas...)</p> <p>maybe jong kong dit Malayan nam tung jor (Maybe these Malay people are better thinkers)</p> <p>eng wai hou dei lam geh yeh hai make money make money...hou chi ngor dei dong (because they think well and always want to make money, make money like we Chinese people.).</p>
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(S14)

<p>Male awning worker (23)</p>	<p>Hui dei hou kam sau. Lei tai ko tit hai pow chee geh sun mun.... lou dau keong kan ji gei geh lui....</p> <p>(They are more beastly like. You see those news in the newspapers...father rape own daughter)</p> <p>Very bad lar....see they rape own daughter and family members like cousins and aunties...</p> <p>Jan hai mmm hai yan lei geh.... (Really not humane...)</p> <p>Semua dou hai yat yong geh (all are like that)</p> <p>...hai lei cin bin ga ga dui lei hou (In front of you pretend to be good)</p> <p>because oi lei pong mong (because you help them)</p> <p>only....after that mm gin yan jor... (Only after that, you don't see their faces anymore)</p> <p>like pinjam duit from me.....(like borrow money from me)</p> <p>then hou loi jor sin jeng wan.... (then after a long while only they return the money).</p>
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The samples show that 2 male and 2 female participants made comments with all 1 female participant being older (58) and three being younger between 20 to 29. This may imply that younger participants are more biased about their Malay counterparts.

b)The Malay *Rempits*

As has been highlighted by newspapers *Mat Rempits* are young Malay motorcyclists who have become road bullies who abuse the use of their motor vehicles on the highways and create chaos on the road for other users. Lately, they have also been highlighted as terrorists of other motor users when they rob or create terror on the road. As a result, Malaysians view these people with spite. Incidentally, *Rempits* are from the Malay ethnic group.

(S15)

<p>Male Chinese university student (25)</p>	<p>There are some who are cool to mix with but it started always from the first meet if got channel or not....we will maybe talk about music then the place to lepak...like my college fren is a malay who lives in hartamas but doesn't hangout there. He will call me to come my area which is in SS2. He said to me hartamas is full of machans(Malays)...those hangout there are mostly rempits at hartamas square..firstly i tot he say say only but one day i went see la...with my gf and also my another fren with his gf. So we park near the pubs and walk to the hartamas square for food. Aiyoor...the people there u can see mostly are machans and the thing is they will stare at u and also yr gf...if yr gf is hot they will eye on her longer la...haaha...these kind of people ah....and those rempits park their bikes directly outside the square area but its not 1 or 4 u know....its more like 20 like dat....jam pack the road oni for nothing...nevermind hor...thier dressing is like the oldies indie rockers...tight jeans, racing shoes or canvas shoes, a cap on the head but always wear collar shirt and bracelets. The thing special bout them when they talk is the accent like chilla beb, wei apah bender ko wattu... after the dinner i quickly left that place as quick as possible....</p>
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(S16)

<p>Male university student (23)</p>	<p>Where in uni? In uni,,, those are quote alright.. They would socialize chat with you when have problem or sometimes discussion, But the Mat Rempits are seriously a sampah Malaysia, Just lately, my neighbour's car was broken into when she just fot bachj home.. Nine rempits are M alay cos their spoken Malay and their accent is Malay..They broke the window with the helmet and frightened the lady driver, then take the handbag and gone on their bike in a flash,,, Sod aring, The highway also they conquer after midnight, Real malu (shame) to the community that Malays are the rempits.</p>
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Probably, the Rempits are seen as reflective of machoism, hence only male and young participants made such comments.

c)The Great Pretenders

This category describes the Malays as being insincere. Perhaps this perception was derived from the Malay culture of being indirect in their behaviours. Hence to avoid conflicts, they may revert to being evasive and this could have been misconstrued as insincerity.

(S17)

Male student (22)	<p>Quite hypocritical lor because firstly they would say one things but then behave another way. For example my ex band member who was the drummer said he is interested but...hmmmmph (sarcastic laugh) next jamming said will be there but call no answer and after one hour he did not show up. The phone can't be contacted anymore,</p> <p>Why they can't just be straight forward? Yes and No...Can or cannot...simple,.</p> <p>But those who are educated are different..like in college they are the enthusiastic one and want to know a lot about you by asking questions even at times to chat. I hope they don't do it for the sake of asking....</p>
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(S18)

Male worker (24)	<p>They are okay...like a few working in the factory.. at first they dunno how the Chinese behaves and they tend to be lazy and also gives excuses..but soon as they work longer they understand business is business and the understanding and bond between Malay and Chinese become good.</p>
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Only two male and young participants made this kind of comment.

d)The Sloth

People who are lazy are also known as sloths. In the past, the Malays were described as being laidback. Tracing back to history, the *orang asli*, as *bumiputras*, have been described as peace loving and stress-free because of their nature to enjoy nature and not being too overwhelmed by development. Thus when elft in their natural habitat they survive very well but once they are displaced and put into urban dwellings, they turn misfits. Perhaps, it is this perception that allowed the Malaysian Chinese participants to perceive their Malay counterparts likewise.

(S19)

<p>Chinese male remisier (33)</p>	<p>They are cool though if u ask me but that's also because i know them a while back and have been working together in some projects...some are able to have the connections with the other officers workings in different area and with them sometimes its easier to get work done. For example the despatch and the drivers, we usually see are the Malays because they want simple and easy work...drive and deliver documents isn't much a difficult job...but there are some who are super lazy and good with excuses when asked why so late only deliver or so late only come pick me up they simply reply jam and banyak kete (many cars) ah.... but sometimes if u are lucky u would see some of them would be drinking teh tarik at the mamak while waiting for time to past to go back and put card to go off work....there are some when you confronted them also they wouldn't admit so and say salah orang lar tu (you got the wrong person) ..or tak mungkin kot (unlikely) ...ahahaha this kind only will admit when caught red handed.</p>
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As can be seen, the comment was from 1 participant.

e)The Lopsided

The Malays are often associated with the local Malaysian government because of UMNO (the ruling party). As Malaysia is a country that tries to cater to the needs of the people, it also has in its policies various projects, sometime back, that tend to benefit the Malays more like economic policies, business participation, education priviledges and so on. Perhaps because of this, the Malaysian Chinese still feel that they are unjust even though things have improved tremendously.

(S20)

<p>Chinese female office worker (23)</p>	<p>I personally do not have any problem communicating with them but if I happen to make friends with a few, I always try to be very careful in case they are trying to take advantage of me. I always have this image of them as not honest and unsincere probably when I was young my family used to say how bad they were they would also show extreme unsatisfaction with their race. I recall I use to hear my uncles and father complaining about the traffic congestion during Friday prayers and also during public holidays where the road is congested and my father will say things like ' li dit Malayan jeng dou geh lou kam sat geh' (these Malays have made the roads so congested) or also something like 'dim kai Malayan luin luin pak che mou yan saman' (why the Malays are parking so haphazardly and they don't get summons' dan hai ngor dei double pak dou jong saman, (whereas we</p>
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	all double park, we get summons). Malayan pin sam geh. (The Malsy are unfair) pong ji gei geh jong jek' (Helpe their own kind only) ... but as I grew older I try not to let those remarks to have bad impression on the Malays. So far able to talk and laugh...share jokes and shopping tips.. watch movie and laugh together...but nothing more personal comparing with my Ji Muis (my own Chinese cliques).
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(S21)

Chinese business man (55)	They....they...they should be fairer with scholarships...many..many..many.. students who got more than 11 As in their SPM (High school examination) also did not get their scholarship from government, and..and..and.....that is not fair lah....
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(S22)

Chinese male student (23)	I don't understand the Malays....no..no why they see the Indonesians as Malays even when they come from another country and we all the Chinese are seen as their enemies hah? It's funny why they would give the Indonesian Malay rights just because they look Malay. Why should we give them similar rights as the citizens of the country..just because they live here for years then they deserve it? What a fool..I deserve more rights than those illiegals cos I am a citizen of this country but I don't have equal rights like others cause I am not bumi..it doesn't make sense..
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Only 3 male participants made such a comment about their Malay counterparts.

Neutral viewpoints

Naturally, some speakers are unable to view their viewpoints in a straightforward manner so they tend to make neutral remarks. These are shown in the following two speakers' responses.

(S23)

Female Chinese student (20)	The Malays ah...ummmm...ha, ha, ha...orh okay...(scratching his head) looking akward for a second...) no (answer)
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(S24)

Female Chinese Hawker (48)	Ummchi wor... mou meh dim yong geh...(I am not sure...nothing seriously bad ...)
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	Kong yat leong kui wa cheh... (Can talk a few words.) Mou meh kai keng,, kan nan ming bak hei dei... (Nothing much to talk about,,,difficult to understand them.)
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As can be seen, females tend to avoid risk taking hence, they prefer to make neutral remarks.

Conclusion

From the responses of the 24 Malaysian Chinese participants who were interviewed about their perceptions, their information could be further classified as

- a) 15 males (62.5%)
- b) 9 females (37.5%)
- c) 5 were above 50 years of age (20.8%),
- d) 2 were above 40 years of age (8.3%),
- e) 2 were above 30 years of age (8.3%)
- f) 15 were between 20 to 29 years of age (62.5%)

Of the perceptions detected from the 24 participants who were of 15 males and 9 females, it was found that there were a total of 10 positive responses (41.6%) with 2 (8.3%) neutral responses and 12 (50%) negative responses. This highlights the fact that the hypothesis of this study was less accurate with negative remarks making the mark instead of the hypothesized positive remarks.

Of the 10 positive responses extracted from the interview, 6 (60%) were made by male participants and 4 (40%) were made by female participants. This implies that the Malaysian Chinese males were more accepting of their Malay counterparts by a percentage of 20% more. Of the 60% of male responses, it was found that 60% of the older participants were more accepting in contrast to 40% of the younger participants.

Of the 12 (50%) negative remarks passed by the remainder 14 participants, it was quite clear that these were derived from the behavior of the stereotypes of

Malay which could have been passed down by the family prejudice. The negative responses include the Malays being boxed into:

- a) Borrowers, (22.2% of females and 13% of males have this perception)
- b) *Rempits* (Only 13% of males have this perception)
- c) Great Pretenders (Only 13 % of males have this perception)
- d) Sloths (Only 6.7% of males have this perception)
- e) Lopsided (11.1% of females and 13.3% of males have this perception)

In these views projected by the speakers, it was also clear also that 22% of the female participants or 2 out of 9 made neutral remarks about their Malay counterparts, suggesting that they prefer to be fence sitters rather than be committed to their views. It is possible that these participants prefer to avoid trouble, in case their responses can get them into trouble, a common trait of Chinese people who prefer to avoid trouble than to make their viewpoints heard.

On the average, it can be said that Malaysian Chinese may have a slightly more negative perception about their Malay counterparts although the positive responses were just a little percentage below, that is 8.3% lower. Of the Malaysian Chinese interviewed, it can be said that older Chinese participants are more accepting of their Malay counterparts and this may be due to their immigrant attitude of being grateful to the host country that had allowed them to remain behind. It is also possible that the older participants are more distanced than their younger participants who feel that they are a part of this country. In general, it can also be said that younger speakers have more daring feelings about their views and they say what they feel because they see Malaysia as their own country which belong to them. On the contrary, female participants tend to be poor risk takers but this is probably because of their trait of avoiding trouble.

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