

Use secret family password to beat scammers

GEORGE TOWN: A secret family password or phrase can help spot scammers as AI voice-cloning technology has become increasingly realistic, said Universiti Putra Malaysia Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology associate professor Dr Nur Izura Udzir.

“Just as banks use security questions, people can also have a password or phrase known only to their family members,” she told theSun.

She said AI could now produce voices that sound remarkably like real people,

copying not just the way they speak but also their tone, accent and emotions.

She said some systems could even mimic breathing patterns, making it difficult for many people to tell the difference between a genuine voice and an AI-generated one.

Nur Izura said although the technology has many legitimate uses in areas such as education, entertainment and customer service, scammers are finding ways to exploit it.

“When the voice sounds exactly like someone we know, we can easily believe it

is coming from a trusted person. Anybody can fall victim to this.”

She said voice-cloning tools are becoming cheaper and easier to access, with some available through commercial platforms and others through open-source software.

Nur Izura said scammers do not rely on cloned voices alone as real-time voice-modulating devices are also available, allowing a human caller to alter his voice live during a conversation to sound like someone the victim knows.

“They can also manipulate caller identi-

fication systems so that calls appear to come from a family member, friend or someone whose name is already stored in a victim’s contact list.”

She said the danger increases when scammers create panic by claiming that a loved one has been kidnapped, involved in an accident or detained by authorities.

She added that some scammers are also using AI systems that could respond during conversations, allowing them to interact with victims in real time rather than relying on pre-recorded messages. – **The Sun**