Exploring the Impact of Ethnicity on Susceptibility to Voice Phishing



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Introduction

- Through voice phishing or **vishing**, adversaries use voice to target individuals into disclosing sensitive information.
- Prior research has shown that users' first language influences their susceptibility to text-based phishing.
- **Research Gap:** No research has been conducted on the **impact of native language accents** on **susceptibility to voice phishing**.
- **Research Goal**: How native language accents influences willingness to share sensitive data.

Method

- Recruited 140 Prolific participants, fluent in English.
- Average age: 33.2 years (std: 10.8).
- 43% had a technical background.
- Used an AI-based tool to generate voice prompts.

Example Study Vishing Prompt

Hi! We are calling to inform you about **parcel delivery**. To deliver, you need to provide your **credit card details** for just the shipping charges urgently. The parcel contains a gift that you've won at your local pharmacy store. Please provide your details now.

Study Design

- Created 7 surveys based on one betweensubjects and two within-subjects factors.
- Between-subjects factor:
 - 1. Native language of participants (four levels: English, Hindi, Chinese, Spanish).
- Within-subjects factors:
 - 1. Phishing languages (two levels: native language and English)
 - 2. Phishing prompts (two levels: parcel delivery, new Medicare card).

Survey Number	Native Language	Accent Ethnicity of Phishing	
		Prompt One	Prompt Two
1	English	English	English
2	Chinese	Chinese	English
3	Chinese	English	Chinese
4	Spanish	Spanish	English
5	Spanish	English	Spanish
6	Hindi	Hindi	English
7	Hindi	English	Hindi

Table 1. We generated seven surveys based on accent Ethnicity and participants' native languages

Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses

- Quantitative Analysis: Polychoric correlation.
- Qualitative Analysis: Thematic analysis.
- Creating a codebook with two coders and resolving all the disagreements in the coding process.

Results



Fig. 1. Participants reported willingness to share credit card information

Accent Prompt	Native Language			
	Spanish	English	Hindi	Chinese
Spanish	0.99	-	-	2
English	*0.80	0.99	0.99	*0.91
Hindi	-	-	0.99	-
Chinese	-	-	-	0.99

- Except for Hindi native speakers, Spanish and Chinese native speakers were significantly more susceptible to vishing attacks in US-English accents compared to their native language accents.
- Participants mentioned the implied urgency in the prompt as the main reason to be willing to share their sensitive data.
- As somebody who utilizes Medicare and relies on it greatly, it's the only way I can obtain my health insurance so making sure I have the right card is extremely important as otherwise I can't get medical aid.