Russia's RT Leads a Global 'Information Militia' on Social Media to Bypass Censorship on Ukraine-Related Disinformation

Adversary Insights™

5 October 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nisos researchers discovered a Russian state-sponsored multilingual Telegram channel (@video_languages) that serves as a repository for propaganda videos about the war in Ukraine. These videos, which are subtitled in 18 languages, are being posted on four social media platforms via accounts that show coordinated inauthentic behavior (CIB). The most influential network was on Twitter; content also appeared on Gab, Gettr, and TruthSocial.

Sponsored by RT. The Russian state-controlled international news outlet RT is sponsoring the initiative as one of many recent tactics for circumventing Western bans on its media content. At its launch in April 2022, RT's editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan stated that the "video languages" effort is part of the "people's information militia" and is meant to facilitate the global spread of pro-Russia perspectives across social media.[1]

On Twitter. In total, 275 Twitter users posted the RT videos with the @video_languages Telegram handle, but we focused our investigation on a nucleus of 123 accounts with identical posting syntax. About a quarter of these accounts exhibit bot-like behavior and most avoid using a human face for a profile picture. One account scheduled up to 16 tweets per day in 15-minute intervals.

Almost all of the accounts are linked to official Russian ministry, embassy, and/or media accounts. Nisos found that dozens of accounts in this network are top amplifiers of the Twitter accounts of various Russian Embassies (particularly Japan and Italy) and also of RT's various language editions (especially RT in Spanish). Another set of accounts boosts content from a pro-Kremlin account that shares war content from a propaganda Telegram channel. Overall, it appears likely that the "video languages" initiative leveraged existing Twitter assets that were already being used to amplify pro-Russia content.

Based on the activity of the 123 nucleus accounts, the languages with the most assets and tweets are Spanish and Italian, followed closely by English, French, and Japanese. The second-tier languages are German, Chinese, Turkish, Polish, and Russian. The remainder had only negligible representation.

On Alternative Social Media. Accounts on the Gab, Gettr, and TruthSocial appear to be a mix of real and fake users, with most posts in English. Many of these users also follow a range of pro-Kremlin Telegram channels, and some "video languages" content was sourced from other pro-Kremlin channels that are also supporting the initiative, and from a Twitter account in the CIB network.

---

[1]https://www.tellerreport[.]com/news/2022-04-26-rt-launched-a-video-project-about-the-special-operation-in-ukraine-in-17-languages.Hkt5gfHB5.html

RT Deploys Telegram-to-Social-Media Tactics

Origin Point: The 'Video_Languages' Telegram Channel

In April 2022, in response to YouTube's ban on Russian state-sponsored content, RT (Russia Today) created a Telegram channel titled РОЛИКИ НА РАЗНЫХ ЯЗЫКАХ [translation: VIDEOS IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES], under the handle @video_languages.

The channel, which now has 22,806 followers, compiles shareable video content that has been subtitled into 18 languages to date. RT's editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan stated that the channel is a tool for "the people's information militia" and urged followers to send the videos "to your friends, acquaintances in Poland, Germany, Finland - wherever you want, in the language you need."[2]

So far, the videos are subtitled into Arabic, Chinese, Czech, Dari, English, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish, and Vietnamese.

The overall goal, consistent with Russian propaganda objectives, is to reframe the narrative on the war in Ukraine. The channel's videos all tell the same story from different angles, claiming that the Russian military is generously saving a Ukrainian population besieged by a corrupt, genocidal government and by Nazi militants. Many of the videos feature interviews with civilians who express their gratitude to the Russian armed forces or lament alleged Ukrainian atrocities.
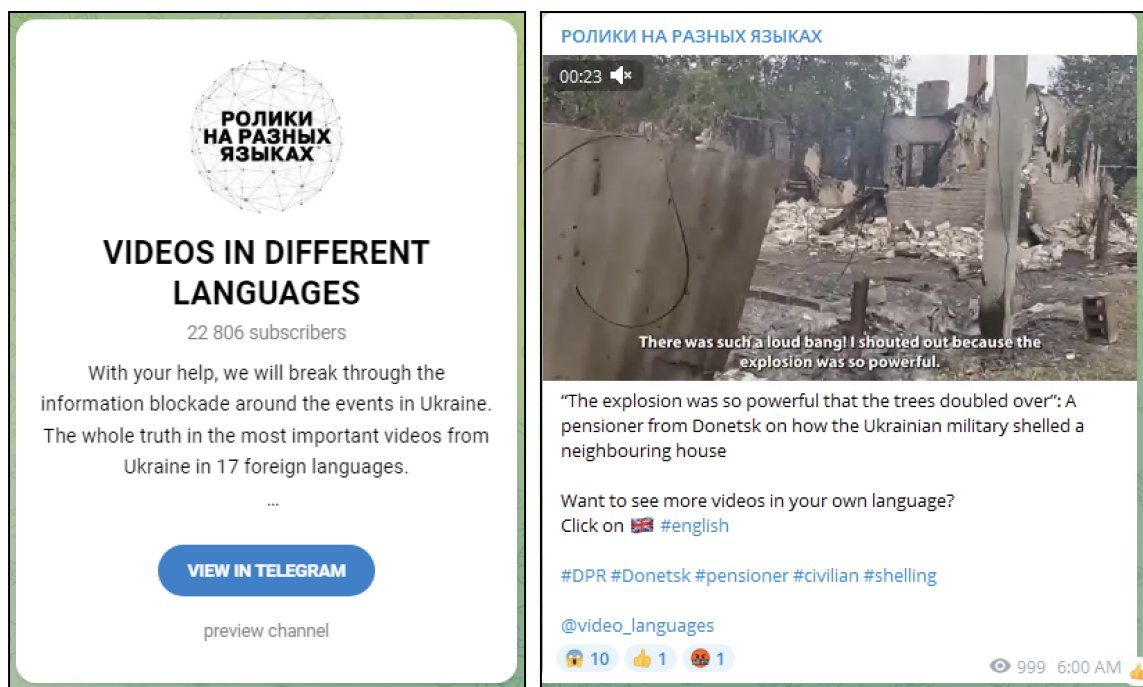
Graphics 1-2: The VIDEOS IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES Telegram channel intro, plus a sample post in English.[3][4]

---

[2] https://tvzvezda[.]ru/news/2022427123-XVmhy.html
[3] https://t[.]me/video_languages
[4] https://t[.]me/video_languages/6482

The idea of a shareable repository of translated content is not new: it was inspired in part by the success of Yuri Podolyak's InfoDefense Telegram channels, in which crowdsourced volunteers translate Russian propaganda content into their own languages. In fact, RT approached Podolyak to propose a partnership, but he said in a video that he turned it down in order to maintain his own editorial independence.[5]

Where Content Was Posted: Four Social Media Platforms

The chart below shows the breakdown of posts discovered on four social media platforms. Not surprisingly, Twitter was the most popular site for posts, but Gettr, Gab, and TruthSocial had active users who appear to be engaged in the same effort.[6]

Platform	Users	Posts	Languages
Twitter	123	326	18
Gettr	19	32	5
Gab	9	12	3
TruthSocial	5	13	1

This is not the first time that a Russian influence operation has surfaced on the newer social media platforms. Graphika uncovered a coordinated influence campaign around the hashtag #IStandWithPutin and #IStandWithRussia on both Parler and Gab right around the start of the Ukraine invasion.[7]

The content on Gettr, Gab, and TruthSocial did not appear as organized as on Twitter; some users shared from alternate Telegram channels, or added their own hashtags, and may have been posting more haphazardly. But the presence of these posts on the newer social media platforms is still noteworthy, particularly because it illustrates the reach of a dissemination campaign that spans Telegram to social media in multiple languages.

How Content Is Posted: Identical Posting Patterns

At least 275 Twitter users posted "video languages" content, and some may be authentic users acting out of personal conviction or ideological affinity. However, a smaller subset of 123 Twitter users shared the content in exactly the same format, even across languages, which is one indicator (among many others) of coordination.

---

[5]https://www.isdglobal[.]org/digital_dispatches/the-info-defense-network-crowdsourcing-soldiers-for-the-information-war/
[6] Other social media platforms also have "video languages" content but are not covered in this report.
[7] https://www.washingtonpost[.]com/technology/2020/10/07/russian-trolls-graphika-parler-gab/

In this format, the user posts a flag, a hashtag indicating the video's subtitling language (in English), then the handle to the Telegram channel, followed by the video. Posts often contain an introductory text that may or may not be copied from the Telegram channel.

Although the flag, hashtag, and handle are all available in each original Telegram post, the users posting on social media were careful to delete the original line "Want to see more videos in your own language?" and consistently arranged the flag, hashtag, and handle in one line. Most users also deleted the extra hashtags offered in the Telegram post. Examples from Twitter are below.[8][9][10][11][12]
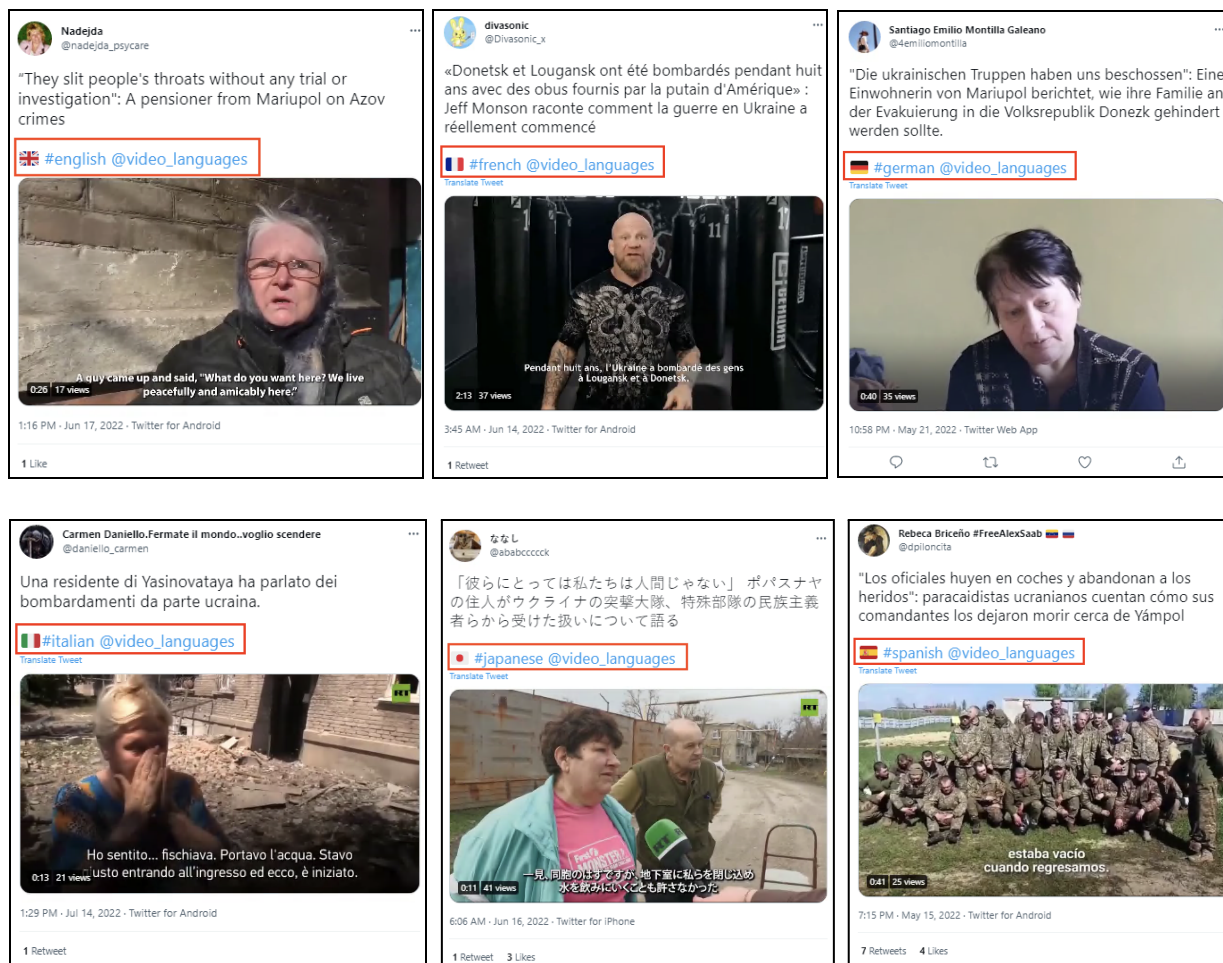
Graphics 3-8: Sample tweets showing parallel posting formatting across languages.

Similar patterns appeared on Gab, Gettr, and TruthSocial, as noted further on in the report.

---

[8] https://twitter[.]com/nadejda_psycare/status/1537846629075664900

[9] https://twitter[.]com/Divasonic_x/status/1536615747690053632/video/1

[10] https://twitter[.]com/4emiliomontilla/status/1528208546520829952

[11] https://twitter[.]com/daniello_carmen/status/1547634374266408962

[12] https://twitter[.]com/ababccccck/status/1537376019933368320

Who Posted the @Video_Languages Handle: Top Influencers

A total of 275 Twitter accounts referred to the @video_languages handle in their posts. The top 10 influencers listed below all share the posting syntax mentioned above and are part of the 123 Twitter accounts in the CIB network.

Display Name	Handle	Languages	Mentions
Ukraine facts (multilingual)	@video_languages	Chinese, Czech, Dari, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese	96
非自公民の脱原発に一票（しろ）2	@mkxftL857rFZM4q	Japanese	79
ななし	@ababccccck	Japanese	39
Santiago Emilio Montilla Galeano	@4emiliomontilla	Spanish, Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Turkish, Vietnamese	32
凛明	@mappisenyou	Japanese, Spanish, Persian, Polish, Russian	29
shift47ym	@shift47ym	English, Japanese	26
Ricerca della verita'	@Cirenderaliberi	Italian	19
Anam Cara	@AnamOxana	English, German	11
Mikael	@TonyMikael8	Italian	11
morgantina4031	@morgantina4031	English, Italian, Polish	8
望山月	@wangxiang2021	Chinese	6

Indicators of Inauthenticity

Nisos researchers examined the group of Twitter users who posted "video languages" content in 18 languages, discovering further evidence of inauthenticity. Indicators include:

- Unusual language combinations for multilingual boosting of Russian propaganda.
- Metadata analysis indicating high bot scores on multiple accounts in the network. Some of the flagged accounts also had abnormally high tweet volumes (around 300 tweets per day).
- The use of deepfaked or doctored images as profile pictures, or the widespread use of animal or cartoon images as avatars.
- On one account, bulk-scheduled tweets using TweetDeck.

Multilingual Propaganda on 12 Accounts

A total of 12 accounts posted in multiple languages. Several factors suggest that these accounts are for multilingual propaganda boosting:

- The content is purely political, and it aggressively promotes a Russian perspective on Ukraine.
- All of the accounts also share propaganda from official Russian ministry accounts, Sputnik, RT, the Spanish-language rebrand of RT content under the name "Ahi les va," pro-Russia Western journalists, and/or Twitter analogues of Russian propaganda channels on Telegram.
- The languages of the @video_languages videos sometimes do not match the primary (or even secondary) language of the Twitter account in question. An authentic user would be less likely to share videos in languages he or she does not speak.
- Many of the language combinations on specific accounts are unusually diverse and unlikely to occur among most multilingual users, such as Serbian and Portuguese, or Polish and Persian.

Display Name	Handle	Languages
Ukraine facts (multilingual)	@video_languages	Videos in Chinese, Czech, Dari, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese. *Primary language is Turkish.* *Shares many followers in common with the Russian Embassy in Turkey.*
Santiago Emilio Montilla Galeano	@4emiliomontilla	Videos in Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese. *Primary language is Spanish.* *Also shares content from Ahi les va, which is an RT-led rebrand in Spanish.*
凛明	@mappisenyou	Videos in Japanese, Persian, Polish, Russian, Spanish. *Primary language is Japanese.*

		Retweets content from official Russian Ministry accounts in Russian.
SPEED🇷🇺🇵🇸	@AtlasLegendsNo4	Videos in German, Italian, Spanish. *Primary language is Japanese.* *Also retweets content from Sputnik in Japanese.*
Fakten CH #SolidaritaetMitBhakdi	@FaktenCH1	Videos in German, Italian, Spanish. *Primary language is German.* *Also shares RT content in German, plus retweets in French attacking political figures.*
Marina Z 🇷🇺 🇧🇾 🇷🇸 🇨🇳	@marisha837	Videos in Italian, Portuguese. *Primary language is Russian.* *Pinned tweet promotes English-language Russian Ministry of Defense Telegram channel. Retweets from RT and @AZMilitary1, which is linked to a Russian propaganda Telegram channel.*
morgantina4031	@morgantina4031	Videos in English, Italian, Polish. *Primary language is English.* *Retweets content in English and French from pro-Russia journalists and from Chinese state-affiliated media.*
虹 rainbow #NOWAR #NONewFascism	@precious_nijiko	Videos in French, German, Polish, Spanish. *Primary language is Japanese.* *Retweets content primarily from Twitter account @AZMilitary1, which is linked to a Russian propaganda Telegram channel.*
Марат Z	@R4vVUBpypCgf7Hp	Videos in English, German, Spanish. *Primary language is Russian.* *Content is all Russian war propaganda.*
Александр Z	@SfyX6U69PvuMmUv	Videos in Portuguese, Serbian, Spanish. *Primary language is Russian.* *Content is Russian war propaganda, including content from RT and from Russian propaganda Telegram channels' Twitter accounts.*
shift47ym	@shift47ym	Videos in English, Japanese. *Primary language is Japanese.*

		Retweets content in Russian, including from state-sponsored media outlet TASS and from Russian propaganda Telegram channels' Twitter accounts.
Anam Cara	@AnamOxana	Videos in English, German. *Primary language is Russian, although she also retweets in English. User claims to be based in Austria. Also shares content from Telegram channel @PutinDirect.*

Bot-like Behavior on a Quarter of the Accounts

A bot-detection tool flagged about a quarter of the accounts in the network for bot-like characteristics and marked them as likely "fake followers." Ratings from 0 (not a bot) to 5 (definitely a bot) are based on social network structure, friends, activity patterns, language, and sentiment. Out of the 123 users in the "video languages" Twitter network, 31 had scores of 2.5 or higher, which means that about 25.2% of the unique users are very likely to be bots. About 71% of the flagged accounts scored above a 3.5 out of 5, which means that most of the flagged accounts had fairly conclusive indicators of bot-like behavior.

Distribution of Bot Scores Over 2.5
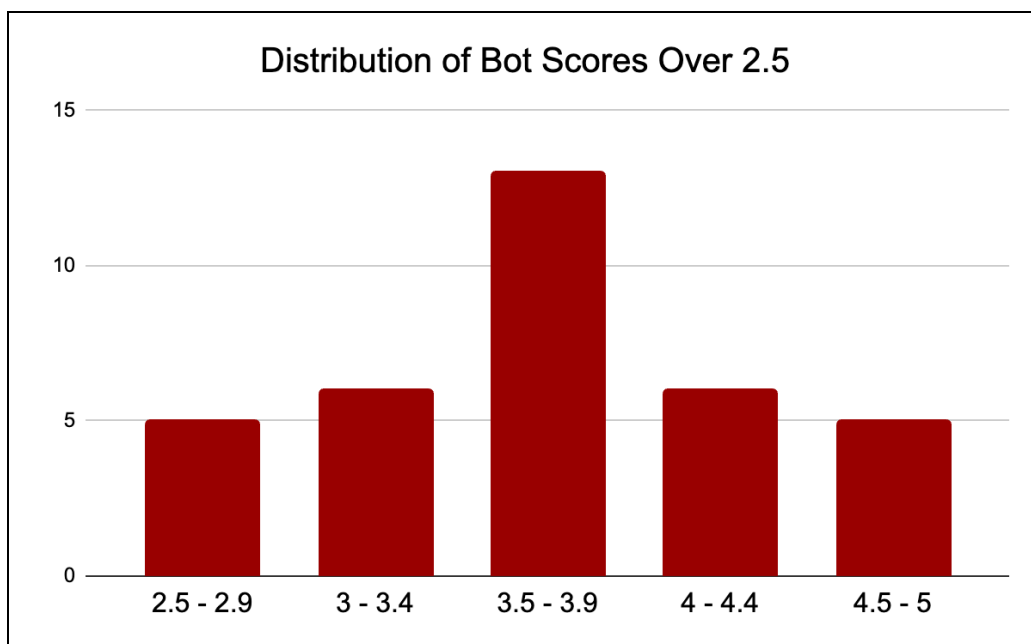
Graphic 9: Distribution of bot scores among Twitter accounts that triggered a red flag. Any score above 2.5 is verging on bot territory; a score of close to 5 indicates greater certainty that an account is a bot.

The tool also indicates what type of bot-like behavior each account exhibits most. The vast majority of the accounts in the "video languages" network were identified as "fake followers," followed by a smaller subset that were flagged as "echo chamber" accounts.

Two examples of botlike accounts with high follower numbers are below.

- "Rebeca Briceño #FreeAlexSaab 🇻🇪 🇷🇺" (@dpiloncita) appears to be an inauthentic account, with a bot score of 4.1 out of 5 and an average rate of 311 tweets per day. The account name references the campaign to free Alex Saab, a Colombian businessman who was indicted in the US for serving as a money launderer for high-ranking Venezuelan officials. After Saab's June 2020 arrest, the Venezuelan government began a social media influence operation (using inauthentic accounts) to campaign for his release. This fake account is likely a Venezuelan government asset that also supports Russian interests. It shared only one "video languages" post, but the account has 27,923 followers.
- "Adriano" (@adrianobusolin) has a bot score of 2.6 out of 5, and was flagged as a possible "fake follower" account. Its online activity shows upwards of 200 tweets per day, which could indicate bot-driven posting. The content mostly consists of retweets, with commentary on local Italian political issues, socially conservative posts, and a sprinkling of Russian propaganda. The user's bio links to a defunct mewe[.]com account under the same name, and to a YouTube video of a Russian folk dancer. This user shared only one "video languages" post. The account targets Italian-speaking users and has a following of 11,300.

Mostly Non-Human or Fake Profile Pictures

The profile pictures in the "video languages" network showed several trends and patterns that suggest inauthenticity, and possibly an intent to avoid using photos of real people and/or GAN-generated images that could be identified as such.

- Very few accounts used human faces for their profile pictures. Only 35 out of the 123 Twitter accounts used an image of a person for their profile picture. Out of this number, 17% were flagged with a very high degree of certainty to be deepfakes. (Most of the other images of people were difficult to verify because they were out of focus, or the person's face was turned away from the camera.)
- About 31% of the accounts chose pictures that represented animals or nature (16%) or a cartoon image (16%).
- An additional 15% of profile pictures used pro-Russia symbols (such as the Z symbol) or a political message as their profile picture.
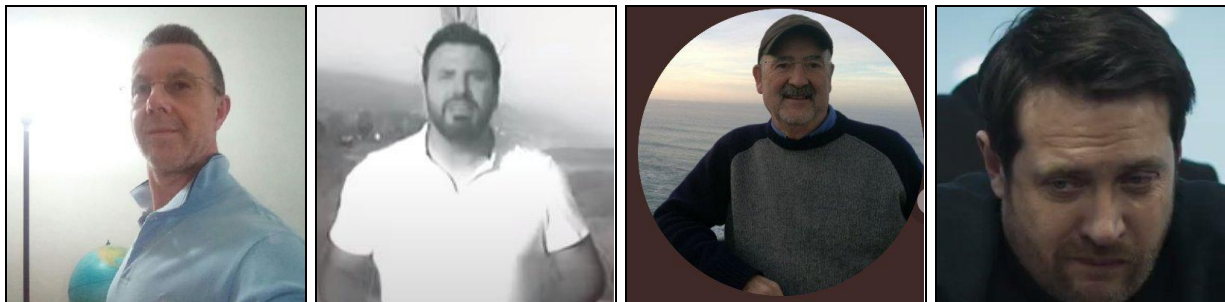
Some of the profile images detected as high-likelihood (over 80%) deepfakes are shown below.[13] [14] [15] [16]

---

[13] https://mobile.twitter[.]com/Adriano07883742/photo
[14] https://mobile.twitter[.]com/Chrstian_Flair/photo
[15] https://mobile.twitter[.]com/SeveZubiri/photo
[16] https://mobile.twitter[.]com/TrumpFix/photo

Graphics 10-13: Profile photos that a deepfake detection software flagged with a percentage score of higher than 80%.

Examples of some of the cartoon profile pictures are shown below. Some accounts used stylized images of skulls, angels, and warriors, among others.[17] [18] [19] [20] [21] [22] Using cartoons (or pictures of animals) could be a tactic to sidestep the increasingly prevalent use of softwares that detect composite face images.

---

[17] https://twitter[.]com/actarus1070
[18] https://twitter[.]com/fevrier_glace
[19] https://twitter[.]com/reivajyp7
[20] https://twitter[.]com/TonyMikael8
[21] https://twitter[.]com/Amstel66
[22] https://twitter[.]com/daniello_carmen

Graphics 14-19: Some sample profile pictures with similar visual themes.

Scheduled Tweets

The @video_languages Telegram channel has an official Twitter account under the name Ukraine Facts (multilingual),[23] active between 13 June and 6 July 2022, with posts in 16 languages. It appears dormant now but may have been a managed asset with links to the Russian Embassy in Turkey.

- The metadata shows that TweetDeck was used to manage the account.
- The tweets' timestamps also show that the posts were scheduled to appear in precise 15-minute intervals. For example, on 14 June, it scheduled 16 posts, all in 15-minute intervals. On 16 June, it scheduled 13 tweets, also in precise 15-minute intervals. It did the same on 6 July, with 34 tweets.
- It follows only 20 accounts, and all of them are Russian or Chinese government or media institutions or officials.
- Out of its 183 followers, it shares 74 in common with the Twitter account for the Russian Embassy in Turkey (@RusEmbTurkey).

[23] https://twitter[.]com/video_languages

Graphic 20: Twitter account for RT's "video languages" initiative.
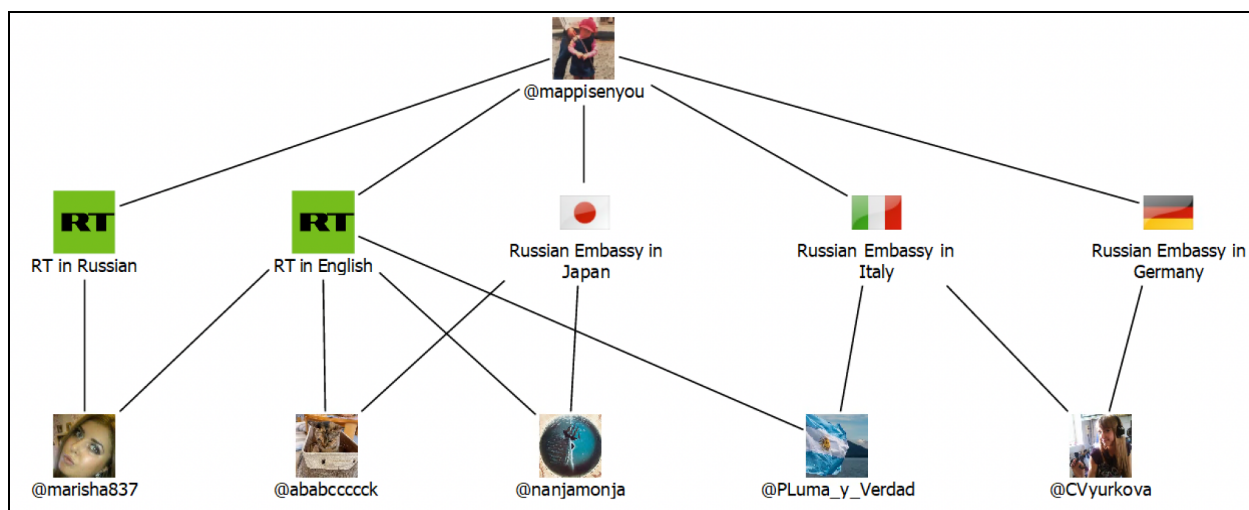
Boosters for Russian Embassies and RT

The Twitter accounts that disseminated "video languages" content also heavily boosted the Twitter accounts of various Russian embassies and of RT in various languages. It is thus likely that the "video languages" project simply leveraged existing Twitter assets that were already amplifying Russian embassy and media accounts in a range of target languages. The same multilingual "super booster" Twitter accounts that shared the most "video languages" content were also observed amplifying multiple embassy and RT accounts in various languages. The charts below show some of the crossover between accounts that boosted both RT and various Russian embassy accounts.

Spanish-focused accounts had some crossover between RT in Spanish and the Spanish and Mexican embassies, which is to be expected.
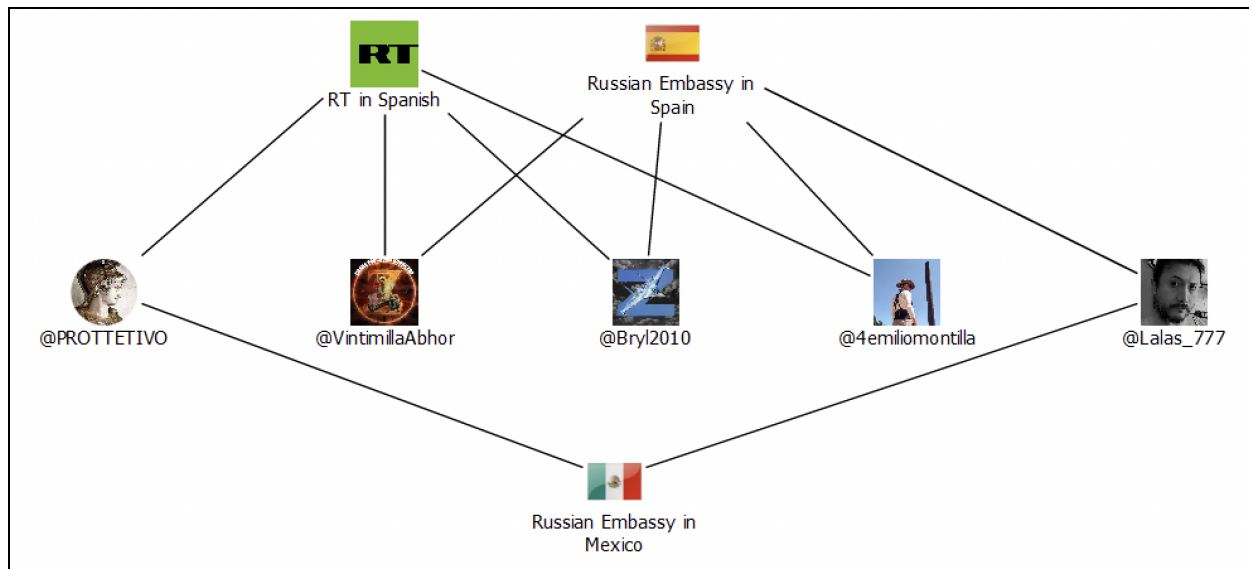
Graphic 21: Accounts that boosted both RT in Spanish and the Russian embassies in Spain and Mexico.

The "super-booster" @mappisenyou not only amplified the Russian Embassy in Japan with 329 mentions and retweets, but also promoted content from the Russian embassies in Italy and Germany, and the English and Russian versions of RT. Several other users also amplified two different accounts, as shown below.

Graphic 22: Crossover between additional RT and Russian embassy accounts, particularly by super-booster @mappisenyou.

Embassy Booster Accounts

The 123 "video languages" accounts are among the top boosters for the Twitter accounts of the Russian embassies in Japan and Italy. To a lesser extent, CIB accounts boosted Russian embassy accounts in Spain, Mexico, and Germany. Some Twitter accounts boosted multiple embassies across languages and countries. These "super amplifiers" also played a multilingual role in the "video languages"

dissemination effort, which suggests that some accounts are tasked with handling multiple languages for various "clients."

Embassies that received little or no boosting included those in the United Kingdom, the United States, Turkey, Portugal, Poland, the Czech Republic, China, Venezuela, Panama, Colombia, and Vietnam.

Russian Embassy in Japan

The Russian Embassy in Japan received more boosting from accounts in the CIB network than any of the other embassies. It also had more interactions with the first four in-network accounts shown below than with other official Russian ministry accounts. Overall, these top 10 accounts boosted the Russian Embassy in Japan account via mentions or retweets.

Display Name	Handle	Interactions
凛明	@mappisenyou	329
桜舞散	@arutemicin	193
将☆彡	@NVfketBfN6RAm1Q	130
ななし	@ababccccck	128
非自公民の脱原発に一票（しろ）2	@mkxftL857rFZM4q	113
🇷🇺Михару Катагири@Победы и мира на Донбассе Z！	@miharu2005p	86
SPEED🇷🇺🇵🇸	@AtlasLegendsNo4	51
tassi-	@tassi32	48
祝、風の時代	@sasha0128	20
knto	@nanjamonja365	20

Russian Embassy in Italy

Numerous accounts from the CIB network also appear to be top boosters for the Russian Embassy in Italy's Twitter account, mainly by mentioning or retweeting its content. Two of them had more interactions with the Russian Embassy account than the Russian Foreign Ministry (18 interactions). At least one account is also a top booster for the Russian Embassy in Japan. The top 10 booster accounts are shown below.

Display Name	Handle	Interactions

maelmale	@maelmale	34
Caterina Vyurkova	@CVyurkova	21
🅰🅲🅣🅐🅡🅤🅢 🍊 Z	@actarus1070	14
Ekaterina меня ZOVут	@EkaterinaVA8	13
凛明	@mappisenyou	10
morgantina4031	@morgantina4031	10
dusterley	@dusterley	8
R.A. Lori	@raff_lore	8
Mikael	@TonyMikael8	5
La Pluma y La Verdad Media🇪🇸🇦🇷🇮🇹🌎	@PLuma_y_Verdad	5

Russian Embassy in Spain

The 10 accounts listed below boosted the Russian Embassy in Spain via mentions or retweets.

Display Name	Handle	Interactions
Abhor Vintimilla	@VintimillaAbhor	25
Reivajyp7	@reivajyp7	17
Santiago Emilio Montilla Galeano	@4emiliomontilla	10
Tintov Deveranov 🇪🇭🇸🇴🇪🇬🇨🇺	@Pinxaor	9
f.x roman fernandez	@fxromanfer	9
Lalas77 🔻 ☭. Z	@Lalas_777	6
yusuf rodriguez	@yusufrodriguez	4
José Mª	@Kupesa1	4
Bryl2010	@Bryl2010	4

Russian Embassy in Mexico

The 10 accounts listed below boosted the Russian Embassy in Mexico via mentions or retweets.

Display Name	Handle	Interactions
Alejandro de Arequipa	@PROTTETIVO	5
Lalas77 ▼ ☭. Z	@Lalas_777	3
Sarah Ilych	Sarah83336937	2
Rebeca Briceño #FreeAlexSaab 🇻🇪🇷🇺	@dpiloncita	2

Russian Embassy in Germany

The 3 accounts listed below boosted the Russian Embassy in Germany via mentions or retweets.

Display Name	Handle	Interactions
H.N.1975	@HN19754	37
Caterina Vyurkova	@CVyurkova	22
凛明	@mappisenyou	5

Boosters for RT

RT's various language editions also received significant boosting from Twitter accounts in the CIB network, which further suggests that existing assets were simply assigned to lend some support to the "video languages" initiative. Overall, the strongest boosting effect targeted RT in Spanish, followed by RT in Russian. RT's general channel had moderate boosting, and there was virtually no boosting on RT America.

RT in Spanish

There was heavy boosting by three accounts in the CIB network, which had more interactions with RT en Espanol (@ActualidadRT) than Ahi les va, which is RT's own Spanish-language rebrand (also an effort to avoid content restrictions).[24] The 10 accounts listed below boosted RT in Spanish via mentions or retweets.

Display Name	Handle	Interactions
Santiago Emilio Montilla Galeano	@4emiliomontilla	203
Bryl2010	@Bryl2010	147

---

[24]https://securingdemocracy.gmfus[.]org/ahi-les-va-the-russian-media-account-hitting-it-off-with-spanish-speakers/

Alejandro de Arequipa	@PROTTETIVO	87
Ahí les Va (RT rebrand in Spanish)	*@Ahilesvainfo*	*44*
La Cofradía de los Botones Negros	@CFBotonesNegros	21
Ana Ruotti	@AnaRuotti	20
Carlos Duncan	@CDuncan2020	19
Abhor Vintimilla	@VintimillaAbhor	17
Christian Flair	@Chrstian Flair	6

RT

The version of RT that targets the general English-speaking world was also boosted from numerous accounts in the network, although to a lesser degree than the Spanish-language version.

Display Name	Handle	Interactions
iLL Eagle 💤	@Qaraqul	27
Marina Z 🇷🇺🇧🇾🇷🇸🇨🇳	@marisha837	12
ななし	@ababccccck	11
knto	@nanjamonja365	10
凛明	@mappisenyou	6
La Pluma y La Verdad Media🇪🇸🇦🇷🇮🇹🌍	@PLuma_y_Verdad	6

RT in Russian

There was moderate boosting of RT in Russian, as shown below.

Display Name	Handle	Interactions
Александр Z	@SfyX6U69PvuMmUv	21
凛明	@mappisenyou	7
Marina Z 🇷🇺🇧🇾🇷🇸🇨🇳	@marisha837	5
Марат Z	@R4vVUBpypCgf7Hp	4

Anam Cara	@AnamOxana	3
FévrierGlace #OTANNO 🇪🇸 ☭	@fevrier_glace	3
зуммер Москвы@	@IrwanBa46235097	3
Vitali	@Amstel66	3

Amplifiers of Unofficial Russian Military Account

Many users in the network are also highly connected to the @AZmilitary1 Twitter account (50,400 followers), which posts English-language Russian military updates content from the Telegram channel @AZmilitary11 (25,000 followers). The in-network accounts below boosted and amplified @AZmilitary1 tweets about the war in Ukraine.

Display Name	Handle	# Interactions
虹 rainbow #NOWAR #NONewFascism	@precious_nijiko	389
CASANOVA CADER Marie	@MarieCader	47
Irina	@heyhelloirene	17
Reivajyp7	@Reivajyp7	12
Reggie Meezer	@ReggieMeezer	10
Morgantina4031	@morgantina4031	10

Overall Trends in Posting Behavior

A high-level view of the network sheds light on the strategic priorities (or relative strengths and weaknesses) in RT's Twitter asset deployment across languages. The key findings are:

- The network has more users who posted the videos in Spanish than in any other language, possibly reflecting greater resources and asset development in that language (as well as a larger target audience).
- Italian users are the second most numerous language group, but are the most prolific in terms of "video languages" tweets using the hashtag #Italian.
- Engagement levels per tweet tend to be fairly low. An occasional post by an influential user will sometimes account for as much as half of the recorded engagement in a language group.

#Languages With the Most Twitter Accounts and Tweets

Videos with the hashtags #Spanish, #Italian, and #English had the most unique Twitter users pushing out content. The chart below shows the top 9 languages with the most Twitter accounts posting content alongside the number of tweets they published to promote the video languages project.

Number of Users vs Number of Tweets Per Language
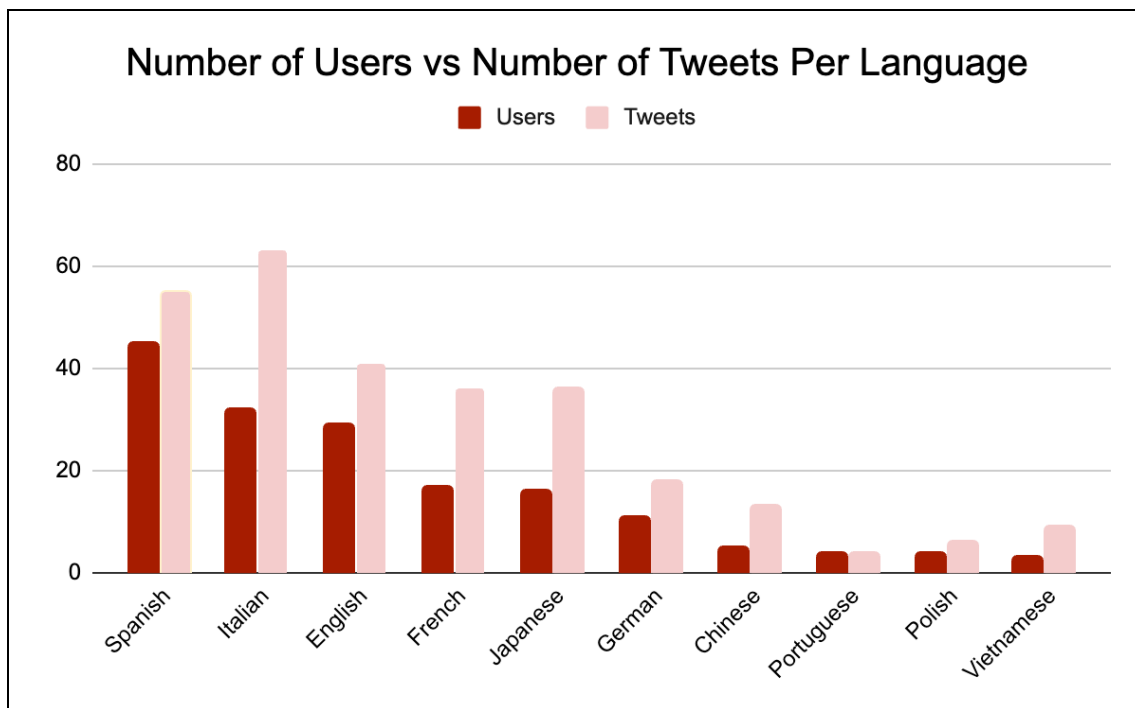
Graphic 23: Twitter users (red) and tweets (pink) promoting the video languages posts across 10 languages.

Spanish. The comparative abundance of Spanish-language assets is consistent with the much greater popularity of RT's Spanish-language media outreach compared to its English-language versions. (On social media generally, RT en Español has significantly more followers than on its English-language accounts.) Spanish-language Twitter assets may also reflect the need for more diversified approaches to target the specific concerns of many Latin American countries, along with Spain.

Italian. The relative prevalence of Italian also tracks with wider trends. Media reports have noted that Russian disinformation has been disproportionately influential in Italy, not only through media outlets like RT and Sputnik, but also via national TV channels and known covert propaganda sites like News Front. The "infowar" appears to be effective. A recent survey found that Italians are the least likely out of all EU citizens to blame Russia for the war in Ukraine, with only 56% of Italians believing that Putin is the aggressor.[25]

English. Social media content moderation is stricter in English than in other languages, so there could potentially have been more users with #English "video languages" tweets if content moderation

---

[25] https://decode39[.]com/3721/italy-russia-disinformation-news-front/

resources were equal across all languages. English-language accounts that commented on US politics also supported President Trump and emphasized divisive issues in American society.

French. French content tracks with a general focus on influencing EU populations. Accounts posting in French also routinely attacked President Macron and accentuated divisive issues in French society.

Japanese. The number of Japanese users was surprising; there were also strong connections between Japanese-language accounts (more so than in other languages). Furthermore, we observed an even larger secondary network of at least 10 Japanese accounts that amplified "video languages" content (albeit without following exactly the same format) and were closely linked to each other and to the @AZmilitary1 account, which is linked to a Russian military Telegram channel.

#Languages With the Most Engagement

The engagement metric (an aggregation of likes, retweets, comments, and quotes) is shown below, layered onto the data about the number of users and tweets.
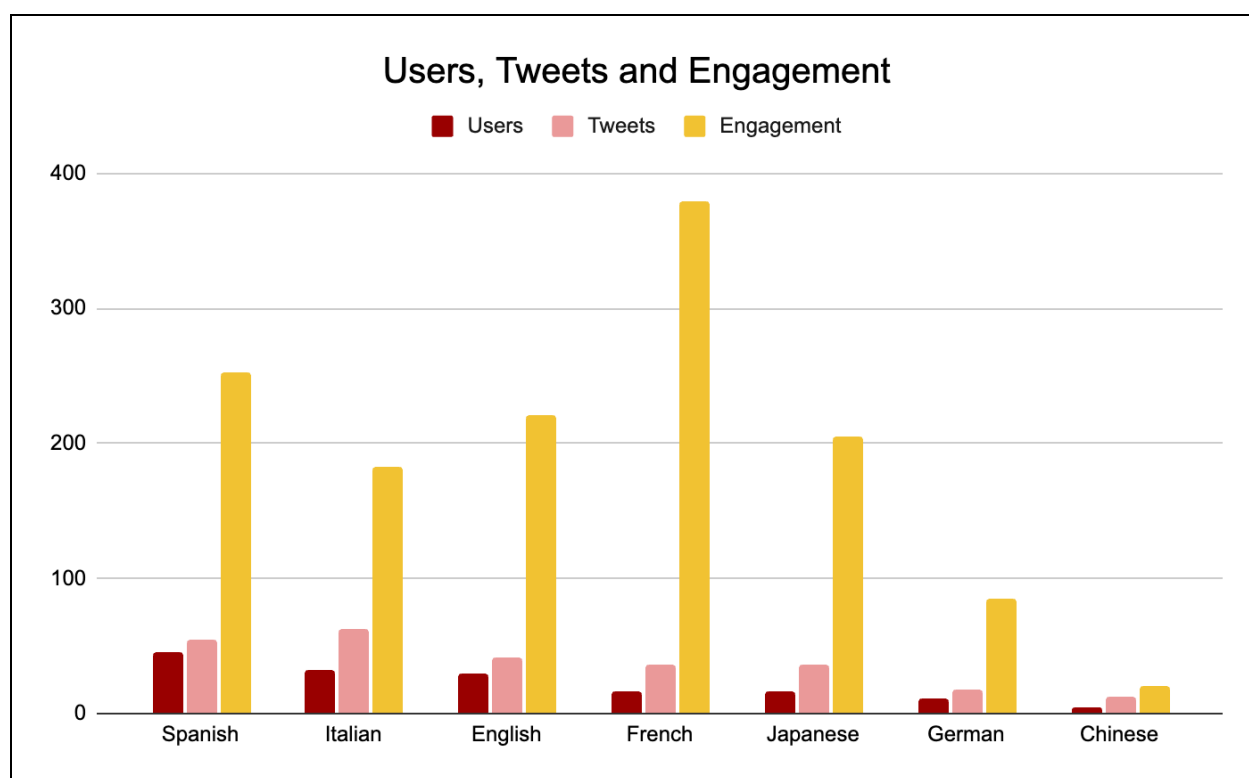
Graphic 24: Engagement totals (an aggregate of likes, retweets, comments, and quotes) on all of the tweets per language.

The disparities in the data have different causes.

- The French-language engagement metrics is due to a post by a single user, @Louan07, who tagged four other users in a post that received 133 retweets and 129 likes.[26]

---

[26] https://twitter[.]com/Louan07/status/1526181711528312833/

- The high Spanish engagement levels are due to the aggregate effect of a large number of users whose posts receive modest but consistent reactions. The same applies to Japanese-language posts.
- More than half of the English-language engagement (145 out of 221 reactions) was due to a single post by a popular user, DONBASS Z 🇷🇺(@TrumpFix), likely an inauthentic user.[27]

Content on Alternative Social Media Sites

Regarding content on Gettr, Gab, and TruthSocial, the overall key findings are:

- Gettr had the most content and in more languages than Gab and TruthSocial.
- Users on Gab and TruthSocial appear to have sourced "video languages" content from pro-Kremlin Telegram channels that are also promoting the RT videos.

A few unique discoveries also stood out:

- Gab carried a post from a user who quoted RT editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan without attributing it to her, about the purpose and scope of the "video languages" effort.
- A user on TruthSocial strongly promoted an extensive list of pro-Kremlin Telegram channels, including Intel Slava Z, War on Fakes, and the InfoDefense network.
- A single user who has the same username across Gab, Getter, and TruthSocial posted "video languages" content on all three platforms.

Gettr

Content on Gettr was the most extensive out of the three alternative social media sites. Most of the posts counted in the chart below all shared the same posting characteristic as the Twitter network (flag emoji, #language, @video_languages).

Languages	# Users	# Posts
English	3	3
French	4	6
German	5	9
Japanese	4	6
Spanish	1	5

---

[27] https://twitter[.]com/TrumpFix/status/1525311658884841472/video/1
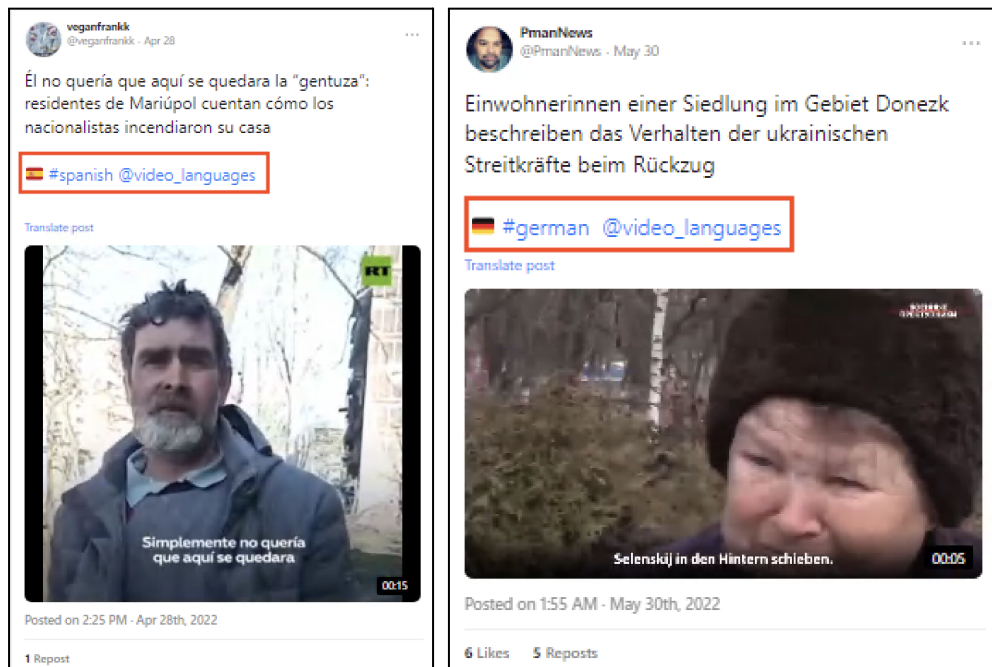
Graphics 25-26: Gettr posts with the same format as the Twitter network.[28]

There is also some evidence that content travels from Twitter to Gettr. The Japanese-language post shown below includes a retweet from @shift47ym, which is one of the accounts in the CIB network on Twitter.[29] In fact, all three of the Gettr user @Chiyomaro's posts are forwarded from Twitter user @shiftym47's tweets; all feature the RT @shift47ym in front of the introductory text.

Graphic 27: The Japanese-language post tags the Twitter handle of one of the accounts in the Twitter network.

---

[28] https://gettr[.]com/post/p17hq4zfd38
[29] https://gettr[.]com/post/p1d1ay85a10

Gab

"Video languages" content on Gab appeared mostly in English, with a few posts in Italian and Spanish.

Languages	# Users	# Posts
English	7	10
Italian	1	1
Spanish	1	1

A post from April 2022 – around the time that RT launched the "video languages" channel – echoed RT editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan's language about the project's overall goals.
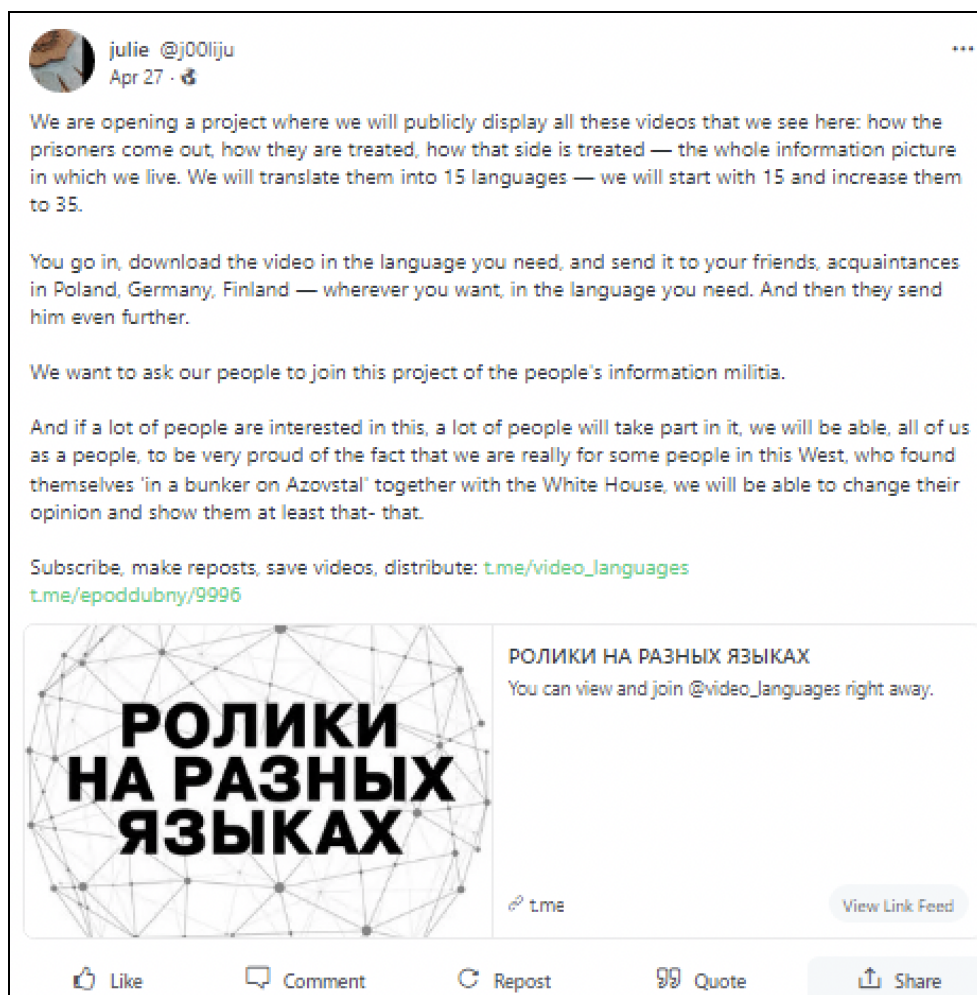

Graphic 28: Gab post echoing Margarita Simonyan's announcement of RT's video languages initiative.[30]

---

[30] https://gab[.]com/j00liju/posts/108202678894269856

Various Gab posts appear to have been sourced from popular pro-Kremlin Telegram channels that are also amplifying content from the @video_languages Telegram channel.

Telegram Channel Name	Telegram Handle	# Followers	Shared By Gab User
UKR LEAKS eng *Managed by Vasily Prozorov, a former Ukrainian security service officer who now works for Russia's special services.*	@ukr_leaks_eng	44,871	@starknightz[31]
Rosella Fidanza *Italian-language channel.*	@RosellaFidanza	42,409	@WittieKittie[32]
Frente del Este *Spanish-language channel.*	@frentedeleste	4,651	@CantordeLuz[33]
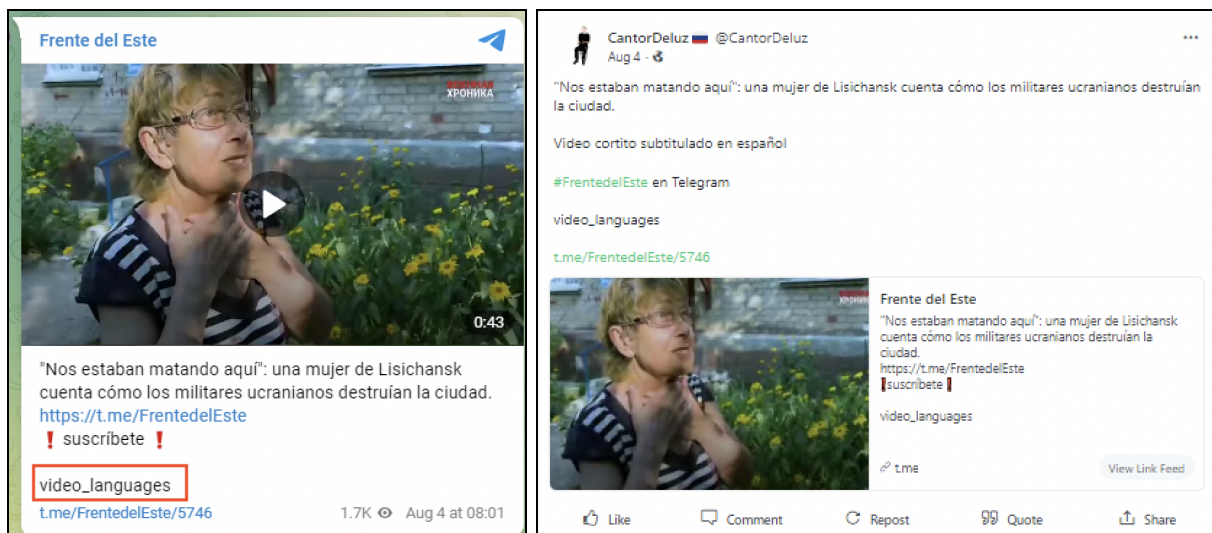
Graphics 29-30: Video languages content on Frente del Este (left)[34], which was then shared onto Gab (right).[35]

---

[31] https://gab[.]com/starknightz/posts/108258552439120175
[32] https://gab[.]com/WittieKittie/posts/108839264482127274
[33] https://gab[.]com/CantorDeluz/posts/108766256345923385
[34] https://t[.]me/FrentedelEste/5746
[35] https://gab[.]com/CantorDeluz/posts/108766256345923385

TruthSocial

On TruthSocial, all of the observed posts were in English, and 5 users wrote a total of 13 posts. Two findings show strong connections between TruthSocial and Russian Telegram channels.

First, the top promoter of "video languages" content, Amica Imperatoris 🇷🇺🇺🇸⚕ (@RightRoad), wrote a lengthy thread recommending a wide range of pro-Kremlin Telegram channels, including Yuri Podolyak's InfoDefenseENG channel (which RT's "video languages" initiative emulates) and also the "fact checking" War on Fakes channel (which received boosting on social media from Russian embassy accounts around the world). The @video_languages channel was among those recommended.[36]

Two TruthSocial users reposted "video languages" content from a popular pro-Kremlin Telegram channel that is also promoting RT's videos. Three posts shared "video languages" content from "John Sinmiedo/Fearless John/Ukraine exposed" (@UkraineHumanRightsAbuses), a channel with 38,356 followers.[37] [38] [39]

One of these Telegram-sourced posts, by TruthSocial user @ULTRAMAGAPATRIOTATLANTA, is below.
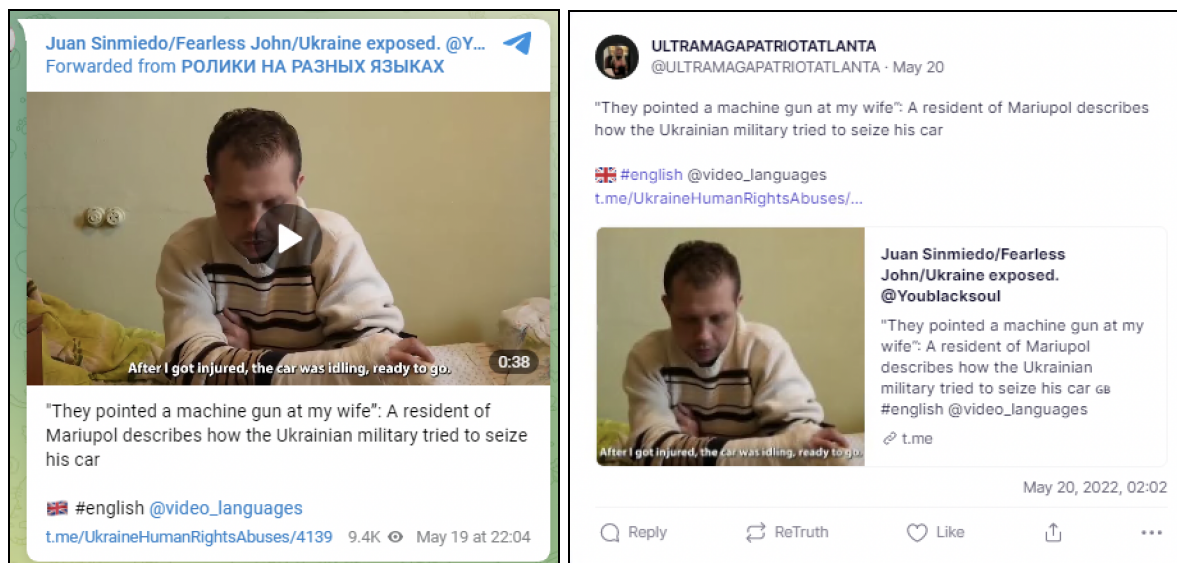
Graphics 31-32: "Video languages" post picked up by the "Juan Sinmiedo" Telegram channel (left)[40] and then shared by a TruthSocial user (right).[41]

---

[36] https://truthsocial[.]com/@RightRoad/posts/108544440336738134
[37] https://truthsocial[.]com/@ULTRAMAGAPATRIOTATLANTA/posts/108332748404751966
[38] https://truthsocial[.]com/@starknightz/posts/108330866991653921
[39] https://truthsocial[.]com/@starknightz/posts/108330673984853261
[40] https://t[.]me/UkraineHumanRightsAbuses/4139
[41] https://truthsocial[.]com/@ULTRAMAGAPATRIOTATLANTA/posts/108332748404751966