

Yasmine Hursault

1973215



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Supervisor: dr. Jing Zeng

Second reader: dr. Donya Alinejad

**Trust-building mechanisms in news translation  
applications**

Walkthrough analysis of transparency, personalization, and interactivity  
affordances in the Courier International App

## Abstract

This thesis delves into trust-building mechanisms within news translation applications, with a specific focus on the Courier International App. Through a comprehensive walkthrough analysis, the study explores how transparency, personalization, and interactivity are utilized within the application to foster trust with users. Drawing on a theoretical framework that emphasizes the importance of trust in digital news, the research investigates the implementation of these trust-oriented affordances on the Courier International App as a case study. By examining the user-centered interface, navigation menus, layout design, and visual elements of the Courier International App to identify user-friendly features and design choices that contribute to a trust-building user experience, this study uncovers the strategies employed to establish a personalized relationship with readers and enhance their trust in the platform. The findings of the study shed light on Courier International's digital trust-building strategies, prioritizing transparency the most. The results suggest considering additional measures, such as enhanced personalization features or direct interaction options within the application. This research also offers stakeholders in the digital media industry and news organizations a blueprint for fostering trust on their own platforms and enhancing trust building strategies in online news translation applications.

# Table of contents

<b>Trust-building mechanisms in news translation applications</b>	<b>1</b>
Walkthrough analysis of transparency, personalization, and interactivity affordances in the Courier International App	1
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Theoretical framework</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Trust in digital news	6
2.2 Trust orientated affordances on news applications	8
2.2.1 Transparency	8
2.2.2 Personalization	9
2.2.3 Interactivity	10
2.3 Research Questions	12
<b>3. Identifying trust-building mechanisms via a walkthrough analysis of the App</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1 Data collection	13
3.2 Data analysis	14
<b>4. Walkthrough analysis of the App trust-building affordances</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 RQ1. How does Courier International use transparency to build trust in its App?	15
4.2 RQ2. In which ways does the App reinforce trust in its implementation of personalization?	20
4.3 RQ3. To what extent does Courier International utilize interactivity within the App to convey trust?	27
<b>5. Conclusion</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>6. References</b>	<b>33</b>

# 1. Introduction

In the rapidly evolving landscape of digital news consumption (Doudaki & Spyridou, 2014; Nozal et al., 2017; Padley, 2012, Westlund, 2012), the concept of trust plays a pivotal role in shaping user perceptions and interactions with news translation services (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1281). With the proliferation of online tools increasing the amount and spread of information available, which are not always to be trusted (Hartley et al., 2023, p.1375-1376), establishing trust in news translation services becomes crucial for fostering informed civic engagement (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282; Schranz et al., 2018, p.73), user satisfaction and engagement (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282), and the commercial viability of their online platforms (Schranz et al., 2018, p.73). The integration of trust-oriented features in news translation media can enhance credibility, user trust, and differentiation in the competitive digital media landscape.

The thesis investigates the intersection of news translation studies and platform studies through the concept of trust (see part 2: “Building trust: theoretical foundations for online news translation platforms”), by focusing on the application (referred to as “App” in the rest of the paper) of the French newspaper *Courrier International* through a walkthrough analysis (see part 3: “Identifying trust-building mechanisms via a walkthrough analysis of the App). By examining how *Courrier International* navigates the concept of trust within its App, this research seeks to uncover the strategies and mechanisms employed by news translation services to build and maintain trust with users, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of trust dynamics in application-based news translation services.

*Courrier International* has a long-standing reputation as a newspaper specializing in translating and curating news from international sources for a French-speaking audience. Its primary function is to offer an international perspective on current affairs by translating articles from a variety of foreign sources, making it an ideal subject for studying how trust is built and maintained in the digital age to ensure the reliability and integrity of translated news content. Although the newspaper is based in France, its editorial scope is global, covering topics and events from different countries and regions. *Courrier International* has been in operation since 1990. Its longevity and recognition make it an interesting case to examine how news translation services operate to build trust in a digitalized world (Courrier International, n.d.-e). The weekly paper version of *Courrier International* features a curated selection of articles on various topics, including politics, culture, science, and more, sourced from newspapers and magazines around the world. It provides readers with a comprehensive overview of global news and perspectives. In recent years, *Courrier International* has undergone a digital transformation, expanding its reach through digital platforms, including its own website and mobile App. This shift toward digital platforms presents an opportunity to shed light on the dynamics of trust in application-based news translation services and offer insights that could inform the development of strategies to enhance user trust in news translation applications. The *Courrier International* App offers

a selection of articles from a variety of global sources, which can present unique features and challenges compared to traditional newspaper applications, such as a global selection of translated articles, curated and contextualized news content, and cultural differences adaptation. The App represents the specific manifestation of *Courrier International's* adaptation to the digital age. Using *Courrier International*, the thesis aims to provide a unique perspective on the multifaceted dimensions through which trust is manifested in digital news translation platforms.

By studying the combination of the Courrier International App as an object of study and the theoretical fields of news translation studies and platform studies through the concept of trust, the following overarching research question emerges: **To what extent does *Courrier International* implement the notion of trust in its App?** This research question focuses on how the notion of trust is implemented by special features to be seen on a news translation application. Understanding how *Courrier International* embeds the concept of trust within its App can provide valuable insights into the strategies and mechanisms employed by news translation services to establish and maintain trust with users in the digital environment. By focusing on the Courrier International App as a case study, this research can offer a detailed examination of how the App elements are utilized to convey trust within the App interface. The unique context and features of *Courrier International* make it an ideal subject for investigating trust dynamics in application-based news translation services.

The results may indicate how *Courrier International* manifests trust in its App across different dimensions. Users' trust in the App may be positively influenced by the presence of personalization or social engagement features in the design or user interface that enhance credibility and reliability, such as transparent source attribution, quality control measures, accurate translations, intuitive navigation, clear visual cues, and user-friendly interactions, customized news recommendations, user comments, ratings, and social sharing options. Additionally, users' prior familiarity and positive experiences with *Courrier International* as a reputable news source could influence their initial trust in the App, leading to higher levels of perceived trust. Hence, the study may uncover potential areas for improvement in trust implementation within the App, highlighting specific features that could be optimized to enhance user trust. This research could then contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics of trust in an application-based news translation service and have practical implications for informing the development of strategies to build user trust in news translation applications.

## 2. Theoretical framework

The analysis of this case study is conducted through the lens of news translation studies and platform studies. News translation studies focus on the translation and adaptation of news content between languages and cultures, to understand the complexities and challenges involved in this transfer of information (Bielsa, 2020, p.365). Platform studies explore how digital media platforms interact and evolve within their various uses (Burgess, 2021, pp.25-26). Combining these two fields helps to understand the importance of trust in online news translation platforms, and how these services contribute to building trust with their users on their digital interface.

### 2.1 Trust in digital news

Trust is defined as the willingness of a trusting person to be vulnerable to the intentions of others (Chang et al., 2013; Friedman et al., 2000), based on specific expectations about their actions. (Grosser, 2016, p.1037). When trusting others involves judging who is reliable and competent in matters that concern them (O'Neill, 2017, p.28), trusting a service provider means judging its reliability and integrity to deliver on its promises (Akter et al., 2012). In online interactions, assessing trust entails examining the reputation and behavior of the trusted to determine whether they are trustworthy (Turilli et al., 2010). In the context of news, trust involves relying on external agents such as journalists to filter and verify information (Aharoni et al., 2022, p.7). Users' perceptions of information platforms and their possibilities influence trust in journalistic content and information sources (Aharoni et al., 2022, p.2).

The evolving nature of journalism in the digital age has blurred the boundaries between traditional media platforms and digital technologies (Doudaki & Spyridou, 2014; Nozal et al., 2017; Padley, 2012, Westlund, 2012). This convergence of media platforms has reshaped the journalism landscape, incorporating multimedia elements and interactive features (Doudaki & Spyridou, 2014, p.258; Nozal et al., 2017; Padley, 2012; Westlund, 2012, p.19). This availability of news online has transformed readers' trust relationship with news (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1281), as the proliferation of online platforms has facilitated the spread of misinformation, propaganda and hate speech (Hartley et al., 2023, p.1375-1376). While news applications are considered more trustworthy than social media, they are still considered less reliable than non-digital media (Kaye & Johnson, 2020, p.257). Online platforms have made news consumption more accessible while also presenting challenges related to trust and credibility (Toff et al., 2021, p.32; O'Neill, 2017, p.28). Users may fear being misled or exposed to harmful content, as it is difficult to assess the trustworthiness and competence of others in digital communication contexts (O'Neill, 2017, p.28). Therefore, it is essential for information services to foster trust in the digital age in order to ensure the credibility of information sources. Ethical standards are important to ensure trustworthy online communication (O'Neill, 2017, p.31; Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282-1284; Toff et al., 2021, p.32) and to fulfill their role in supporting

informed decision-making and civic engagement (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282; Schranz et al., 2018, p.73). When users trust a news platform, they perceive the information provided as accurate, reliable and impartial. Guaranteeing the veracity of the news is therefore essential for building and maintaining readers' trust in a news service (Bielsa & Bassnett, 2008a, p.117), keeping a positive reputation and attracting a loyal audience (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282-1284; Schranz et al., 2018, p.73). Given that trust plays an important role in user satisfaction and audience engagement (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282), and that users are more likely to engage with and return to platforms they trust (Akter et al., 2012), trust in news services is crucial to their commercial viability in the digital age. Indeed, trusted platforms have a competitive advantage and can attract increased traffic and user loyalty (Schranz et al., 2018, p.73).

Trust in online news translation services is as important as they are not exempt from this distrust that affects news services in the digital age, as translation is seen as influencing how the public perceives news topics and contributing to the formation of influential discourses (Aragrande, 2018, p.13). By building trust, news translation services can fully fulfill their mission of enabling accurate and effective communication of news content to global audiences (Bielsa & Bassnett, 2008b, p.56) and going beyond the transformation of words between languages (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024) to encompass linguistic, cultural, media and communicative considerations (Aragrande, 2018; Bielsa & Bassnett, 2008b, p.70; Guidère, 2016; Rendall, 1997; Vermeer & Chesterman, 2021). Enhancing trust fosters a healthy media ecosystem in the digital space where news translation services disseminate information crossing cultural barriers and promoting intercultural understanding (Aragrande, 2018, p.13; Bielsa & Bassnett, 2008b, p.59). Furthermore, as the accuracy of information can also be affected by the translation process itself (Bielsa & Bassnett, 2008a, p.117), it is not always possible to obtain word-for-word accurate translations (Bielsa & Bassnett, 2008a, p.122). It is therefore important for readers to trust news translation services that seek to convey the intended meaning and impact of the original text, while preserving the integrity of the information content (Bielsa & Bassnett, 2008a, p.122). News translation services are particularly affected by the new media environment, with digital media enabling instant global dissemination of news (Bielsa, 2021, p.6; Putri, 2019, p.1) and online translation tools gaining in popularity due to their accessibility and speed of service (Gaspari & Hutchins, 2007, p.2). Earning the trust of their users is therefore vital to the success of their online business.

## 2.2 Trust orientated affordances on news applications

To capture the attention of online audiences, news outlets provide journalistic content that conforms to the logic of platforms rather than mass media, indicating a platformization of information. Platforms are shaping journalistic practices, influencing content distribution decisions and impacting the standards of journalists and news organizations (Hartley et al., 2023, p.1382). News is increasingly viewed on smartphones and tablets, making mobile news reading one of the most popular activities on mobile devices (Dowell & Constantinides, 2016). With mobile applications occupying a prominent place in the lives of news consumers, almost every media outlet has a dedicated application that offers greater visibility and readability than a website on a mobile device (Kaye & Johnson, 2020, p.257) and news applications are used as platforms to distribute translated news articles (Putri, 2019, p.1). By designing and implementing specific affordances, platforms can determine how users interact and encourage certain actions (Kiesow et al., 2021, p.962). Affordances refer to features offered by the platform that enable users to take specific actions or make sense of the information presented to them (Burgess, 2021, p.30). Trust-oriented affordances refers to the design features or functionalities of a platform that influence users' perceptions of trustworthiness and credibility. Based on the theoretical work from Aharoni et al. (2022), Friedman et al. (2000), Grosser (2016), Ross Arguedas et al. (2023) and Toff et al. (2020; 2021), three main key affordances related to trust can be identified: transparency, personalization and interactivity.

Transparency provides users with access to accurate, correct and ethical information and news within news applications (Grosser, 2016, p. 1043; Toff et al., 2021, p.41; Toff et al., 2020, p.14). Personalization enables customers to enjoy a customized experience (Dowell & Constantinides, 2016, pp.1-3; Nozal et al., 2017, p.1271) based on how information is presented on the interface (Ross Arguedas et al., 2023, p.13). Interactivity empowers users to engage directly with news content (Aharoni et al., 2022; Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282) through the social contacts they can have on an application (Ross Arguedas et al., 2023, p.13) and the relationships they can entertain, with the news service and with each other (Toff et al., 2020, p.20). By integrating the following trust-oriented affordances, news applications establish credibility, foster user trust and differentiate themselves in the competitive digital media landscape (Toff et al., 2021).

### 2.2.1 Transparency

In the first instance, providing transparency in journalistic practices builds trust and credibility in online journalism platforms (Friedman et al., 2000; Grosser, 2016, p. 1043; Toff et al., 2020, p.18). Transparency in journalistic practices includes transparency of sources and transparency in the editorial process. Indeed, providing users transparent information about the sources of news content reinforces their trust (Grosser, 2016, p. 1043; Toff et al., 2021, p.41; Toff et al., 2020, p.14). This means clearly indicating the origin of articles and the credibility of sources (Toff et al., 2020,



p.14). For translated news content, flagging content from reputable sources is essential to ensure their trust in the provided translation (Toff et al., 2021, p.36). Plus, offering users a diverse range of perspectives, through various sources and covered topics, demonstrates a commitment to balanced and transparent news coverage, increasing trust in the news service (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282; Kaye & Johnson, 2020, p.266).

Additionally, providing transparent information about the editorial process and any bias, such as fundings or potential conflicts of interest, builds trust (Grosser, 2016, p. 1043; Toff et al., 2021, p.41; Toff et al., 2020, p.14). In fact, trust in the media is closely linked to its ethical capacity and the journalistic principles such as fact-checking (Otto & Köhler, 2018; Toff et al., 2020, p.14). This means giving explanation about any fact-checking processes that have been undertaken (Toff et al., 2020, p.14). Encouraging fact-based reporting by providing tools for users to verify claims, like links to reliable sources, reinforces trust (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1283; Otto & Köhler, 2018; Toff et al., 2021, p.36). Explaining how news is selected, as part of the editorial process, is another key element to demonstrate a commitment to balanced and transparent news coverage (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282; Kaye & Johnson, 2020, p.266). Moreover, enabling users to give feedback builds trust as it shows responsibility and commitment to correcting errors (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1283; Toff et al., 2021, p.12; Toff et al., 2020, p.20).

Finally, building trust also requires transparent communication, particularly to address users' privacy concerns and regarding the business model of the online translated news service. Enabling users to address their privacy concerns includes clear information about the conditions of use, the types of personal data collected, data use, access, modification and suppression, and privacy policies (Benbasat et al., 2008, p.9; Bryant et al., 2022, pp.38-43; Turilli et al., 2010, p.342). Transparent communication also encompasses clear information about the business model of news applications. This means delivering accurate explanations about the identity, history, values and functioning of the news organization (Toff et al., 2021, p.41), the application interactions (Friedman et al., 2000), as well as the services offered (Turilli et al., 2010, p.342).

### 2.2.2 Personalization

Secondly, trust in online news services is influenced by the degree of personalization they offer. As news reading is a highly individual activity with differences in how people read and access news (Dowell & Constantinides, 2016), providing higher levels of personalization shows users that their personal needs are understood, leading to increased trust (Liu & Tao, 2022; Zalloum et al., 2019) and higher rates of engagement, satisfaction and loyalty (Aharoni et al., 2022, p.11; Bursleson Mackay & Lowrey, 2011, p.41; Dowell & Constantinides, 2016, p.3; Hase et al., 2022, p.1506). Personalization builds trust through a user-centered experience, personalized services and the possibility for users to tailor their own experience within news applications. A user-centered experience that builds trust includes straightforward and personalized communication in a

user-centered language (Friedman et al., 2000) as using simple, concise and easy-to-understand language fosters trust (Benbasat et al., 2008, p.9).

Making an application easy to use through user-friendly, consistent and intuitive (Benbasat et al., 2008, p.7; Zalloum et al., 2019) design and layout (Ross Arguedas et al., 2023, p.13) and clear labeling of different content types (Toff et al., 2020, p.14; Ross Arguedas et al., 2023) better satisfies users' needs and influences their trust judgments (Ross Arguedas et al., 2023, p.13). Besides, integrating multimedia elements that enhance the presentation of articles (Grosser, 2016, p.1044) also builds trust by using all the possibilities offered by online journalism (Doudaki & Spyridou, 2014, p.261; Grosser, 2016, p.1044).

In addition, personalized services refer to adapting content to the audience. For translated news content especially, providing users with the context of the news (Monzer et al., 2020, p.68) enables readers to distinguish accurate and trustworthy translated news content (Bielsa & Bassnett, 2008a). This also includes the possibility to receive personalized recommendations (Aharoni et al., 2022, p.11 Monzer et al., 2020, p.68), timely notifications and updates (Kaye & Johnson, 2020, p.258). Providing users with real-time news updates establishes trust (Kiesow et al., 2021, pp.971-972; Toff et al., 2021, p.12) by demonstrating an adaptation to the immediacy of the internet, a dominant characteristic of the information environment (Grosser, 2016, p. 1044).

Lastly, personalization refers to the opportunity for users to tailor their news experience to their preferences (Aharoni et al., 2022, p.11), behavior, reading habits, the content they access and the way they interact with it (Dowell & Constantinides, 2016, pp.1-3; Nozal et al., 2017, p.1271). It involves the ability to customize their own news feeds (Aharoni et al., 2022, p.11 Monzer et al., 2020, p.68). Combined with selectivity features, it enables users to adapt to their news consumption by filtering for specific topics matching their preferences (Aharoni et al., 2022), with the ability to search for sources they already trust (Kaye & Johnson, 2020, p.266). Furthermore, offering users the option to accept personalized services allows them to balance the amount of personal data they provide and the level of personalization they receive (Bryant et al., 2022, p.38; Liu & Tao, 2022, p.7). Since users take a risk by downloading an application, as they must decide whether to trust it (Friedman et al., 2000), the opportunity to mitigate these risks by protecting their data based on the application's advice makes them more confident (Bryant et al., 2022, p.41).

### 2.2.3 Interactivity

Thirdly, trust is built on interactivity. As content provided by peers is considered more reliable than information obtained directly from the news media (Aharoni et al., 2022), by integrating interactive features enabling users to engage with news content, news applications build trust and loyalty with their audience (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282) and maintain a relationship with their readers (Toff et al., 2020, p.20). Interactivity in online journalism refers to the opportunity given to users to engage with news content, application stakeholders and to assess an application. Engaging

with news content means enabling users to participate in communication channels, engage with media content, share opinions, user-generated content (Grosser, 2016, p.1044; Kiesow et al., 2021, p.973; Nozal et al., 2017, p.1270), including the opportunity to leave comments or likes (Aharoni et al., 2022; Ross Arguedas et al., 2023, p.13), interact in polls and discussion forums (Doudaki & Spyridou, 2014, p.261), share articles (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282) and view who has shared content and associated discussions (Ross Arguedas et al., 2023, p.13). It also includes participating in discussions through social media (Toff et al., 2020, p.14). Allowing readers to redirect to social networks directly from an application reinforces its credibility (Burlison Mackay & Lowrey, 2011, p.54) and makes information more attractive and accessible to the public (Grosser, 2016, p.1044),

Moreover, offering access to the application stakeholders such as experts and key news personalities who provide in-depth commentary and context on issues gives value and credibility to news applications (Toff et al., 2021, p.32). Providing the possibility for readers to develop a more personal relationship with journalists builds trust as they are more likely to place their trust in news sources less institutionally affiliated (Burlison Mackay & Lowrey, 2011, p.53). This also includes providing accessible and responsive customer support features, such as live chat or in-application messaging, as it builds trust by offering assistance and addressing user concerns promptly (Benbasat et al., 2008, p.9). If the offline media brand is strong, making indicators that refer to the brand, such as logos (Chang et al., 2013), visible to users can transfer its reputation and the trust it encompasses to online platforms (Grosser, 2016, p. 1043).

Ultimately, providing users with the possibility to assess the performance history of an application based on peer reviews gives them the possibility to judge its trustworthiness (Friedman et al., 2000; Toff et al., 2021, p.5). This involves the opportunity for users to view third-party endorsements and certifications, such as seals of approval or trust-marks that offer independent assessments of how well an application can contribute to trust (Chang et al., 2013; Friedman et al., 2000; Ross Arguedas et al., 2023, p.13). It also refers to direct past experiences with an application and the reported experiences of others that creates its reputation (Friedman et al., 2000; Toff et al., 2021, p.5). The possibility of accessing and giving testimonials, reviews, ratings, and user feedback provides social proof to build confidence among users (Beldad & Hegner, 2017; Benbasat et al., 2008, p.9; Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282; Turilli et al., 2010, p.342).

## 2.3 Research Questions

The overarching research question emerges from this theoretical framework: **To what extent does *Courrier International* implement the notion of trust in its App?** Based on the operationalisation of the concept of trust and the three identified affordances related to trust, the three following sub-questions are proposed to guide the subsequent steps of the research:

- **RQ1: How does *Courrier International* use transparency to build trust in its App?**

It examines how trust is conveyed and communicated to users, based on what information is presented on the App and how.

- **RQ2: In which ways does the App reinforce trust in its implementation of personalization?**

It studies how the *Courrier International* App uses customization elements and personalization features in the App's interface to foster trust.

- **RQ3: To what extent does *Courrier International* utilize interactivity within the App to convey trust?**

It explores how *Courrier International* strategically integrates and leverages social signals and engagement features in the App to instill trust.

### 3. Identifying trust-building mechanisms via a walkthrough analysis of the App

This study employs the walkthrough analysis developed by Light et al. (2016). The walkthrough analysis is a methodology that conducts in-depth analyses of digital media platforms by forensically stepping through their interface to closely observe their symbolic appeals to users, design logics, and data flows. This useful tool contributes to the broader field of platform studies by shedding light on the intricate relationships between technology, culture, and user experiences within digital ecosystems (Light et al., 2016, p.882). This study uses it to critically analyze the free version of the App of *Courrier International* by engaging directly with its interface and examining its technological mechanisms and embedded cultural references.

#### 3.1 Data collection

The walkthrough analysis involves a step-by-step observation and documentation of the App's screens, features, and flows of activity, mimicking how a user would engage with it in real-world scenarios. By studying elements such as the placement and symbolism of icons, pictures, and text, it gives insights into how an application guides users (Light et al., 2016, p.882). The walkthrough method enables the researcher to directly interact with the *Courrier International* App, using it as regular users would on a smartphone.

Through a technical walkthrough of the App, the research focuses on a central data-gathering procedure to engage with the App in an analytical manner, exploring its interface, functionalities, and cultural implications during the process of acquiring the App, registering, accessing features and functionalities in the everyday use of the App and its discontinuing use (App suspension, closure and leaving) (Light et al., 2016, p.892). The data is collected through observations and field note-taking during the walkthrough analysis, documenting my observations and reflections on the App's interface, features, content, and user experience and serving as a qualitative record of findings during the App exploration. Screenshots of key interface elements, content displays, features, and user interactions within the App provide visual documentation of specific aspects of the App for later analysis. By combining direct interaction, field notes and screen capture methods, the data collection process required to carry out the analysis avoids potential observer biases by remaining objective and systematically documenting observations.

The research material includes interface elements of the App, such as buttons, menus, navigation paths, labels, textual components embedded in the interface and design aesthetics. Data on cultural references embedded within the App, such as language choices, imagery, and editorial perspectives, are also considered, in addition to technical data related to the technical aspects of the App, such as user interface design, the visual design, layout, and multimedia elements such as images,

videos, and infographics. Secondary data is also taken into account to provide context and theoretical framework for the analysis, including literature on news translation services, digital news platforms, user trends in translated news consumption and relevant studies in news translation studies and platform studies.

### 3.2 Data analysis

The walkthrough method is relevant to answer the research question because it is a practical approach which leads to detailed examination of the platform's features, processes, and user experience. As, according to Light et al. (2016, p.884), the walkthrough analysis is an adaptable method, it was tailored to the own needs of this research. In carrying out the technical walkthrough, the research takes a closer look at the App's mediator characteristics, which convey its technical and cultural influences and provide indications of how the App strives to shape relations between users, how it guides them to interact (or not), and how they construct or transfer meaning from it. This way, the research makes visible aspects of the interface that might otherwise fade into the background of everyday use of the App (Light et al., 2016, p.892) and gain insights into how trust is represented, operationalized, and conveyed through the App.

Aligning each research sub-question with the most appropriate mediator characteristics, this focused approach ensures the analysis of relevant aspects of trust building mechanisms in the App. To answer RQ1, the analysis is conducted on textual content and tone embedded in user interfaces and their discursive power in shaping the use of the App (Light et al., 2016, pp.891-892). By examining the language, text and messages used in the *Courrier International* App, the research looks at how trust is represented through transparent textual elements and content in the App. To answer RQ2, the analysis focuses on the layout of the user interface, meaning the way in which the App guides users in their activities through the placement of elements like buttons, menus or trust indicators, helps to understand how the App personalizes the user's experience. The study of symbolic representation, examining the App's look and feel, alongside its likely connotations and cultural associations with the imagined user and ideal usage scenarios (Light et al., 2016, pp.891-892), investigates how trust is symbolically represented in the App interface through custom visual elements and design choices. To answer RQ3, the research explores the functions and features that group together the devices that enable activity within the App, to identify those that contribute to building trust (Light et al., 2016, pp.891-892), such as social interaction features.

## 4. Walkthrough analysis of the App trust-building affordances

### 4.1 RQ1. How does *Courrier International* use transparency to build trust in its App?

To convey trust to users, *Courrier International* employs transparent strategies and textual elements within its App which includes transparency in its journalistic practices and in its communication. The App is transparent about its journalistic practices, through source transparency, regarding their origins and diversification, as well as through the transparency of its editorial process, involving processes akin to fact-checking, attention to the selection of news and some commitment to correcting errors. Its transparent communication includes clear information about privacy policies and users' personal data, as well as some aspects of its business model.

*Courrier International* places emphasis on transparency in its journalistic practices, which plays a role in building trust in its online journalism platform, according to theories of Friedman et al. (2000), Grosser, (2016, p. 1043) and Toff et al. (2020, p.18). First, the App provides transparent references to the sources of its translated news content, which reinforces the trust placed in them (Grosser, 2016, p. 1043; Toff et al., 2021, p.41; Toff et al., 2020, p.14). The App clearly indicates the origin of articles, in Figure 1 (Courrier International, 2023), as theorized by Toff et al. (2020, p.14). It mentions the origin of all its content, whether it is original content produced by its own journalists or content from other news organizations. This allows users to distinguish between original articles and articles written or translated from other sources. It shows that the App is committed to providing reliable information by attributing content to its legitimate sources. The App clearly refers to the comments made during interviews by indicating "comments recorded by..." and specifies the country of origin of sources used with statements like "seen from Spain; seen from Germany". This ensures the transparency of the reporting process and enables users to understand the perspective in which the information is presented. This transparency in the referencing of sources strengthens user trust, as they can assess the authenticity of the information provided.

The App goes further by including links to relevant content about people or organizations mentioned in its articles. For example, a detailed explanation of the author of the original version of the horoscope is provided in the same section, along with a link to an exclusive translated interview, in Figure 1 (Courrier International, 2023). The "Our sources" section, in Figure 1 (Courrier International, 2023), also displays the latest sources used in the App. Users can easily search for a specific source by country using the search bar, in Figure 9 (Courrier International, 2023), and explore information from different sources via links to their websites. Explanatory articles, in Figure 1 (Courrier International, 2023), are available for each source, providing information on the source's origin, its features and grouping together articles translated by *Courrier International* from that source. This level of detail enables readers to identify articles produced by reliable sources, to check

the original articles and to assess the credibility of the news for themselves, contributing to a feeling of openness. This adds another layer of transparency and reinforces the credibility of the App in the eyes of its users (Toff et al., 2020, p.14). These transparent elements concerning the origins of the source serve as external evidence for users to ensure the reliability of the translations and contents provided (Toff et al., 2021, p.36). By offering transparent information about each source used, the App reinforces the reliability of its journalism.

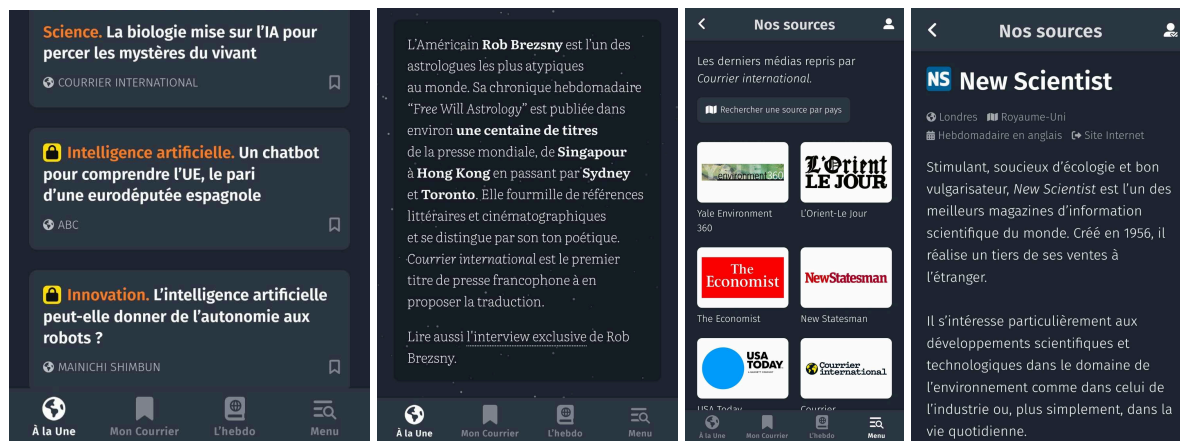


Figure 1: Screenshots of source identifications.

Source transparency within the App is also conveyed through diversification of sourcing, as stated in the description of the editorial process: "varying as much as possible between countries, languages, newspapers and points of view" (Courier International, n.d.-c). The App features articles written by *Courier International* editors, as well as articles from French press and translations of original articles from foreign press as demonstrated by the 'Our sources' section, in Figure 1 (Courier International, 2023), which features internationally renowned newspapers, covering a wide range of topics, including political, economic, social and cultural affairs. The sources present different editorial orientations. While some strive to be neutral and objective in their coverage, such as *The New York Times*, *The Financial Times*, *Nature*; others adopt marked editorial positions, such as *The Guardian*, progressivist and engaged. Some are known to question dominant discourses and criticize established power structures, such as *The Atlantic* with its analytical journalism or *The Electronic Intifada*, providing a Palestinian perspective on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. The newspaper provides its readers with general understanding of the perception of world events around the globe, enabling them to form "informed opinions and broaden their horizons" (Courier International, n.d.-c). This commitment to balanced global news coverage offers users a range of perspectives on a variety of topics, demonstrating transparency and increasing trust in the news service as stated by Fletcher & Park, (2017, p.1282) and Kaye & Johnson (2020, p.266). Nevertheless, in order to translate an article, *Courier International* first needs to request the "right to reproduce" their articles from the original newspapers (Courier International, n.d.-c), meaning that if a newspaper doesn't grant permission, *Courier International* can't publish the content, potentially limiting the points of view it can provide on its App and its diversification of sources.



In addition to the transparency of sources, the transparency of journalistic practices conveying trust within the App also includes the transparency of its editorial process, which encompasses broad reference to what could be considered as fact-checking processes, a description of the selection of news and some involvement in correcting errors. *Courrier International* offers an explanation of its working methods and editorial process in the FAQ section of the App (Courrier International, n.d.-c). The articles selected are discussed and approved, translated into several languages, submitted to in-depth editing and proofreading processes, titled, illustrated and presented in an aesthetic and coherent manner to improve readability. The App provides its readers with tools to check information via links to the foreign press sources concerned, which reinforces trust (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1283; Otto & Köhler, 2018; Toff et al., 2021, p.36). However, beyond referring to primary sources, conducting interviews and proofreading articles, the App does not specifically give in-depth explanation on any other fact-checking processes that are undertaken, as advised by Toff et al. (2020, p.14).

Explaining how news is selected, as part of the editorial process, is another key element demonstrating a commitment to transparency. Journalists meticulously select what they consider to be "the best articles from foreign press sources", offering "something new" from reliable and independent sources (Courrier International, n.d.-c). By providing explanations on how news is selected, the App demonstrates a commitment to journalistic integrity and balanced news coverage (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282; Kaye & Johnson, 2020, p.266), helping to build a climate of trust and credibility with its users.

Plus, the editorial process clearly stated that "articles are corrected" and that "journalists track down the slightest error" (Courrier International, n.d.-c), building trust in the accuracy of the news. However, it does not specify whether these corrections are made as a result of editorial errors, errors in the facts conveyed, translation errors, or come from feedback from users as recommended by (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1283; Toff et al., 2021, p.12; Toff et al., 2020, p.20). Moreover, some criticisms can be made regarding the transparency of the editorial process, as information about it is only available in the FAQ section of the App's settings, in Figure 2 (Courrier International, 2023), which is not the easiest place for users to find. While the internal workings of the organization are explained in detail in the form of a comic strip on the newspaper's website (Courrier International, 2021), this article page is not available on the App. In addition, some ethical principles theorized by Grosser, (2016, p. 1043) and Toff et al. (2021, p.41; 2020, p.14) are not mentioned, such as ensuring partiality or preventing potential conflicts of interest.

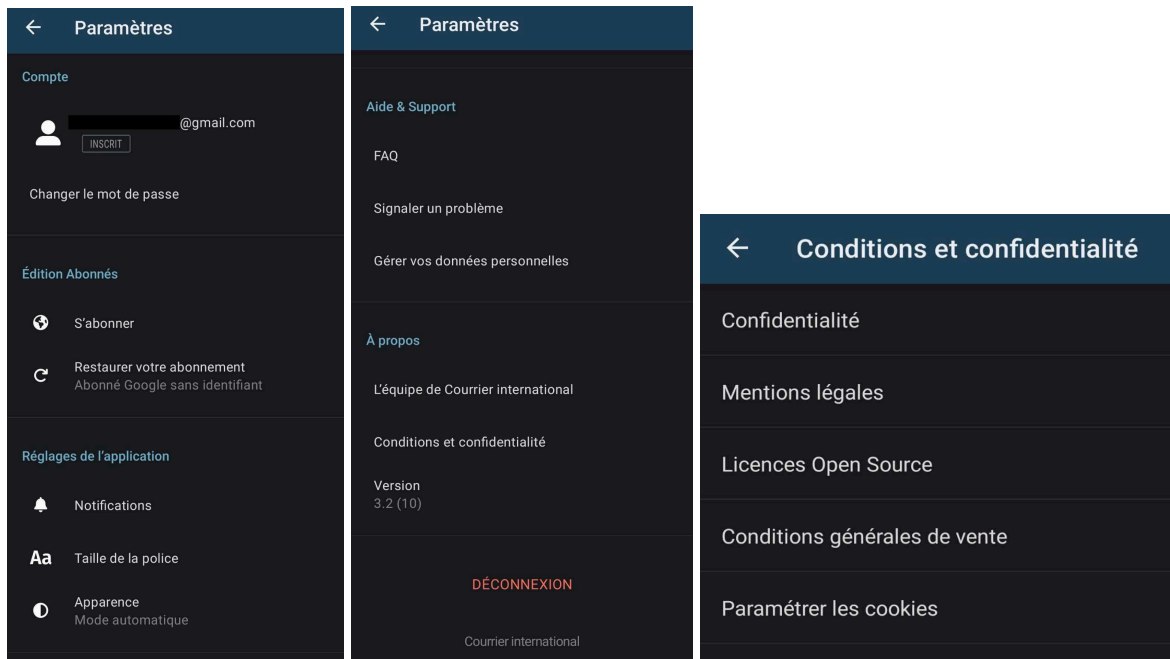


Figure 2: Screenshots of the App settings and conditions of use.

Finally, the App stands out for the transparency of its communication, addressing users' privacy concerns and providing some explanation regarding its business model. The App adopts transparent communication reassuring users of any privacy concerns they may have, delivering clear information about its conditions of use, user's personal data and its privacy policies, as theorized by Benbasat et al. (2008, p.9), Bryant et al. (2022, pp.38-43) and Turilli et al. (2010, p.342). The general terms and conditions of sale (Courier International, n.d.-a) are available in the App settings, in Figure 2 (Courier International, 2023), and provide information on how to use the services offered. Users can access the App's conditions of use in the settings, in Figure 2 (Courier International, 2023). The App presents a well-defined and easily accessible privacy policy (Courier International, n.d.-f) in its settings, in Figure 2 (Courier International, 2023), which clearly indicates what data is collected, how and when it is used, who has access to it, how long it is kept and what rights users have in this respect. The App empowers users by giving them control over their personal data. They can manage their preferences by accepting or refusing specific data processing activities. They can contact the Data Protection Officer via a form (Courier International, n.d.-b) to exercise their rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (*Le Règlement Général Sur La Protection Des Données - RGPD*, n.d.) of the French Data Protection Authority, CNIL (*Particulier | CNIL*, n.d.), in accordance with the rights granted to them in the intellectual property section of the App's legal disclaimer (Courier International, n.d.-d). By adopting transparent communication providing clear terms and conditions, presenting a well-defined privacy policy, the App empowers users and ensures regulatory compliance, establishing trust among users as they are reassured about their privacy concerns and feel confident that their personal data is handled responsibly in accordance with their preferences and legal rights.

The App's transparent communication also provides information on its business model. The editorial process explains how the news organization works. Although the identity and history of the news service are not specifically mentioned, certain values can be deduced from the index of legal notices, such as its commitment to gender equality (Courrier International, n.d.-d), which corresponds in part to the factors contributing to trust established by Toff et al. (2021, p.41). Plus, the App provides detailed information on interactions on its interface, such as the functionalities offered and possible actions, which is in line with the theories of Friedman et al., (2000) and enhances users' trust by ensuring their comprehensive understanding of the App's features and functionalities. Finally, on the subscription page, in Figure 3 (Courrier International, 2023), users can access detailed information on the services they will receive by subscribing, which provides transparency regarding the value users gain from subscribing, in line with the theories of Turilli et al., (2010, p.342). Knowing exactly what they are paying for helps users make informed decisions and increases trust in the App.

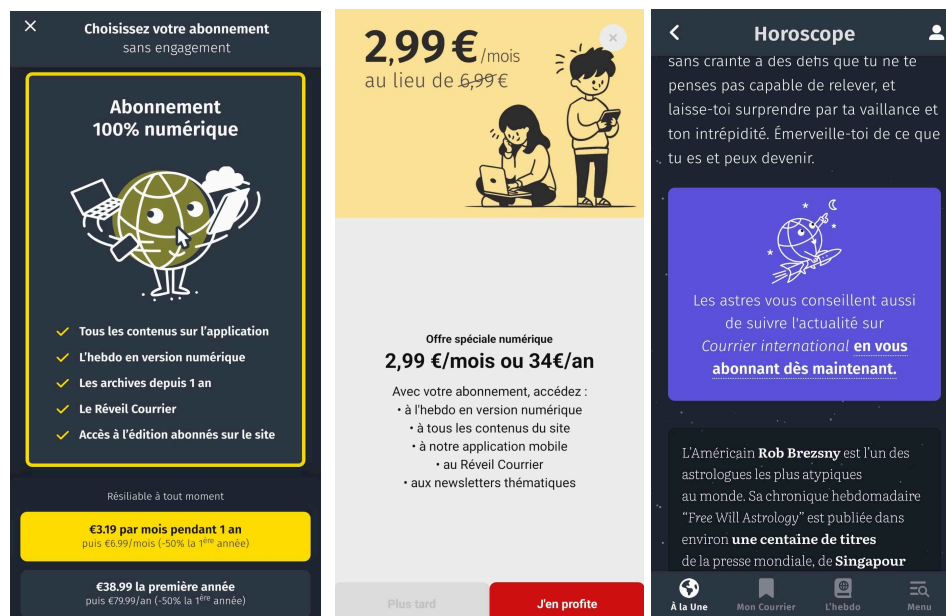


Figure 3: Screenshots of subscription advertisements.

In conclusion, *Courrier International's* commitment to transparency plays a strong role in building trust within its App. By providing clear references to diverse sources, being transparent about its working organization and using accessible communication offering detailed information on privacy policies and the offered services, *Courrier International* establishes a foundation of trust with its audience. Through its transparency in its journalistic practices and communication, the App creates a sense of openness and authenticity that resonates with users. Transparency serves as a cornerstone in *Courrier International's* approach to build trust in its App, fostering a relationship of credibility, and integrity.

## 4.2 RQ2. In which ways does the App reinforce trust in its implementation of personalization?

Secondly, the App builds trust through personalization by providing a user-centric experience, offering some personalized services and giving users some scope to tailor their experience on the App themselves. The experience within the App is centered around users, with personalized language, user-friendly layout and clear labeling, making it easier for users to navigate on the interface and providing them a customized experience. Services are personalized to a certain degree, with content tailored to the audience and certain personalized recommendations and notifications. Finally, users can tailor their experience to some extent by adapting their access to news, using selectivity functions and managing the level of personalization they wish to receive.

Firstly, the personalization features within the App offer an optimized digital reading experience, centered around the user, reinforcing their trust in the App. The App creates trust through personalized communication in user-centered language and tone, as theorized by Friedman et al. (2000) and Benbasat et al. (2008, p.9). This can be seen by the use of first person pronouns, such as in the headings "My correspondence" and "My favorites", or by the use of the French personal form of address "*tu*", with phrases like "*pendant que tu dormais*" (while you were asleep). The App also uses clear language, using short captions going straight to the point at the beginning of its articles to introduce main topics to the readers effectively.

Added to this user-centered language, the App uses a user-friendly layout that makes it easy to use thanks to intuitive design, establishing a personalized relationship with each reader. This ensures that the interface best meets users' needs and inspires their trust, as studied by Benbasat et al. (2008, p.7), Zalloum et al. (2019) and Ross Arguedas et al. (2023, p.13). In practical terms, this is achieved through easy-to-use settings, in Figure 2 (Courrier International, 2023), and an easy-to-navigate interface. The different sections are clearly presented on the home page, with visible photos and quick access to articles. The navigation menus are intuitive, buttons are responsive and scrolling through the interface is fluid. For example, the "Wake Up" section, in Figure 4 (Courrier International, 2023), uses numbers for each topic covered in the folder, making it easy to navigate and enabling users to access their topics of interest with a single click. In addition, the App uses graphic elements, in Figure 4 (Courrier International, 2023), to make the sections easier to view, such as pictograms in the horoscope section, and a globe-shaped character that appears in several areas of the App, personifying the newspaper and the discourse addressed to readers. Furthermore, the App integrates multimedia elements into its articles by exploiting the possibilities offered by the digital space, thereby strengthening its users' trust in its online journalism, as studied by Doudaki & Spyridou (2014, p.261) and Grosser (2016, p.1044). The App enriches its content to complement written articles by including videos and infographics sections, an image gallery, an access to its podcast 'The Sentinels' directly from the App and a retranscription of its audio content via articles within the App.

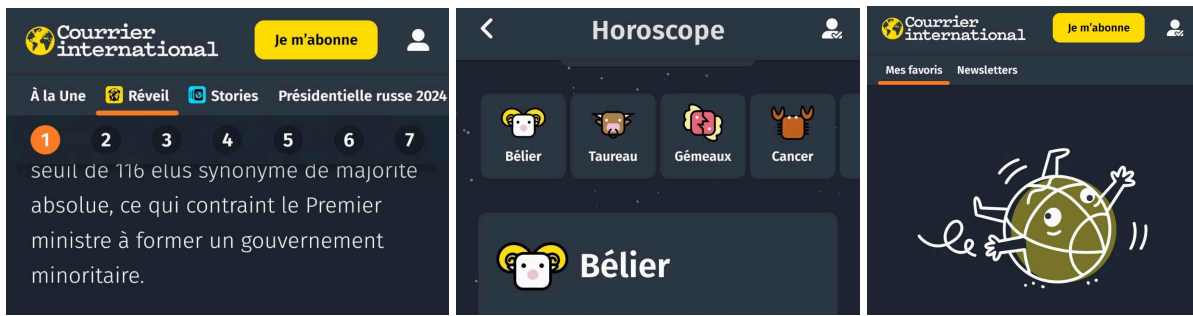


Figure 4: Screenshots of the App graphic elements.

The clear labeling of the different types of content is another important element in this user-centered experience. The App presents a clear categorisation of the different contents, making it easier to access the various sections, in Figure 5 (Courier International, 2023). Articles are grouped into sections such as "Wake-up", "Stories", "France seen from abroad" and "Horoscope". News items are labeled according to their subject, the country concerned or the theme covered, such as diplomacy, the environment, politics, etc. The App uses titles that precisely describe the content displayed. As Ross Arguedas et al. (2023, p.13) explains, this contributes to a clear design that influences users' judgment of trust. By organizing content in a way that is intuitive and easy to understand, the App focuses on meeting the users' needs and preferences, leading to increased trust (Liu & Tao, 2022; Zalloum et al., 2019).



Figure 5: Screenshot of the App labels and sections.

Beyond this user-centric experience, personalization within the App involves personalized services aimed at inspiring users' trust. This takes the form of content tailored to users and, to a certain extent, access to customized recommendations and notifications. First, the content provided on the

App is tailored to its French-speaking audience, being only written in French. More specifically, it focuses on a French audience, as evidenced by the section "France seen from abroad", in Figure 6 (Courrier International, 2023), which focuses on France-related topics and makes no mention of other French-speaking countries. Moreover, the App provides nuanced translations that go beyond the literal conversion of the original articles. The translated articles are accompanied by background information, in Figure 6 (Courrier International, 2023), explaining the historical, cultural, social and political context of the news items, as advocated by Monzer et al. (2020, p.68), enabling users to better understand world events and to distinguish between trustworthy translated news content, as explained by Bielsa & Bassnett (2008a). Thus, the content, tailored to French readers, encourages informed and critical reading and inspires trust in the translation process.



Figure 6: Screenshots of articles tailored to a French audience.

In addition, personalized services within the App include personalized recommendations that demonstrate an understanding of the user's preferences and needs, enhancing trust, as studied by Aharoni et al. (2022, p.11) and Monzer et al. (2020, p.68). Users are invited to regularly read other relevant content in the App via recommendation mentions such as "Our readers have also read", "Also to be read", "On the same subject" and "Most read". To protect their data, users can follow certain recommendations in terms of security measures provided by the App, such as when creating an account, where it is recommended to change their password in the App settings, in Figure 2 (Courrier International, 2023), after receiving the validation email. Such recommendations reassure users that their personal information is being handled responsibly and safeguarded and that the App can be trusted.

Moreover, the App discloses notifications and timely updates that build trust by demonstrating an adaptation to the immediacy of the internet, as mentioned by Kaye & Johnson (2020, p.258) and Grosser (2016, p. 1044). The App displays the last modification date of its articles

to indicate updates in real time. It offers the option of receiving regular push notifications, in Figure 7 (Courrier International, 2023), and provides live news coverage with its 'Wake-up' section, which publishes news that has happened 'while you were asleep' every morning at 6am. This convenience and proactive approach to delivering news fosters trust in the App's ability to keep users informed. Users can configure notifications in the settings, in Figure 2 (Courrier International, 2023), to receive alerts on new articles and important news, so they can keep abreast of the latest news without opening the App. This customization feature contributes to trust-building by showing that the App values user autonomy and strives to provide a tailored news experience. However, these personalized services have limitations. The App does not personalize the content presented and the recommendations made to users according to their preferences and reading history. Users are not able to fully receive personalized content, recommendations and notifications as the personalized functions do not take into account authors, specific sources or the sections and topics of most interest to readers.

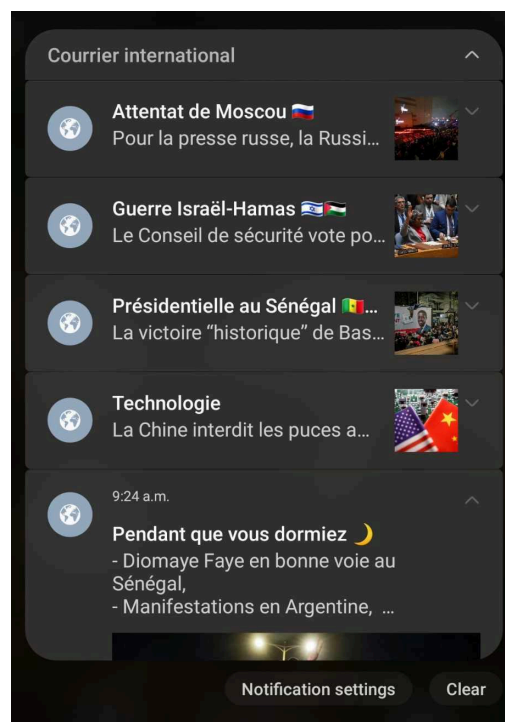


Figure 7: Screenshot of the App notifications.

Lastly, alongside the user-centered experience and some personalized services, the App offers a few personalization options enabling users to create a news experience tailored to their preferences as theorized by Aharoni et al. (2022, p.11), Dowell & Constantinides (2016, pp.1-3) and Nozal et al. (2017, p.1271). The App introduces a number of features to enable them to customize their news access, select their preferred news and choose the level of personalization they receive to alleviate their privacy concerns. To provide users with the ability to customize their own news feed, the App sets up the option to save articles in the favorites section, via the heading "My Correspondence", in Figure 8 (Courrier International, 2023). Users can take full advantage of the App by quickly accessing their favorite content. The "My Correspondence" section, in Figure 8 (Courrier International, 2023),

offers the possibility to choose which newsletters users wish to have access to from the "Manage your Newsletters" tab. By providing users with the ability to customize their news feed, the App acknowledges individual preferences. It gives them control over the content they consume so they are more likely to trust the App and rely on it as a valuable source of information.

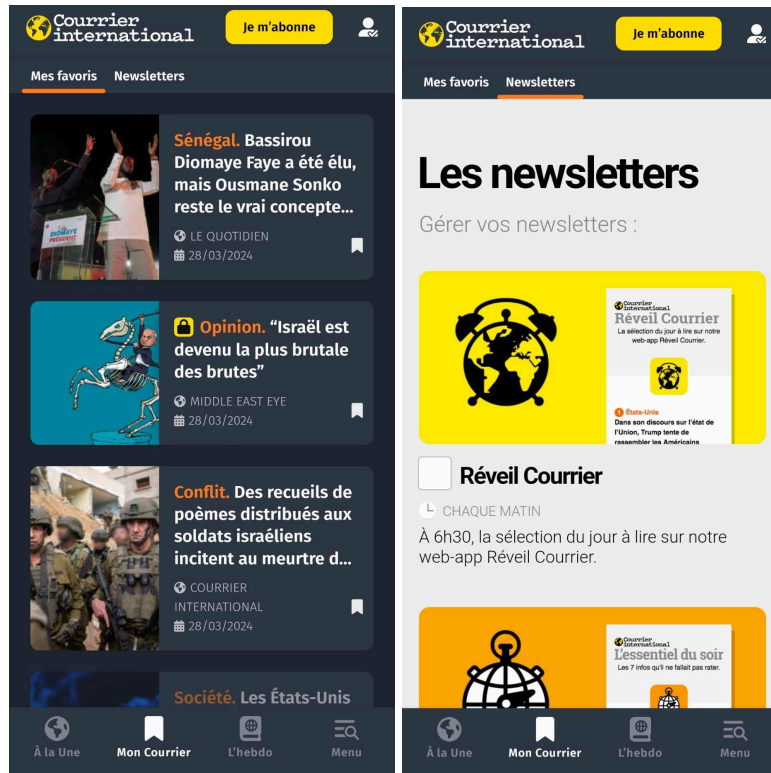


Figure 8: Screenshots of the personalized section "My Correspondence".

To enable users to adapt to their news consumption, the App provides a search function, in Figure 9 (Courier International, 2023), allowing them to search for articles via the search bar in the menu section. They can filter their searches by keyword or country to focus on topics that match their interests or from sources they trust, ensuring they receive information from reliable outlets (Kaye & Johnson, 2020, p.266). By including this customization feature, the App demonstrates a commitment to providing accurate news, fostering trust among users who value reliable information. It enhances user satisfaction as users feel that the App understands their needs and provides content that aligns with their interests.



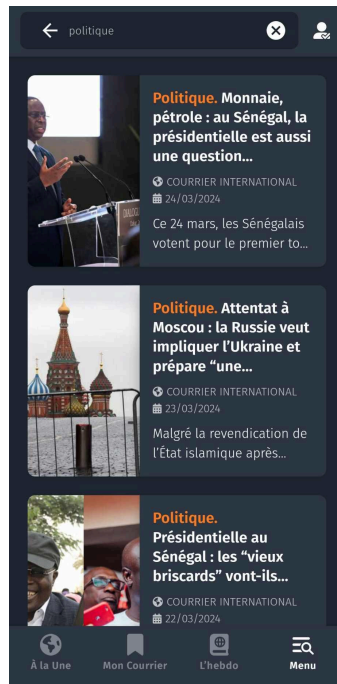


Figure 9: Screenshot of the App search function.

Furthermore, the App offers users the option to balance the amount of personalization they receive (Bryant et al., 2022, p.38; Liu & Tao, 2022, p.7), by accepting or rejecting personalized services. In the App's settings, in Figure 2 (Courrier International, 2023), users can choose whether or not to participate in personalized services and to control how their data is used, making them more confident (Bryant et al., 2022, p.41). They can subscribe to *Courrier International* to receive more content and unsubscribe directly from the App, in Figure 2 (Courrier International, 2023). They can manage their cookies settings in the App, in Figure 2 (Courrier International, 2023), by refusing or accepting them or activating or deactivating certain cookies. Users can manage their preferences regarding subscription offers and invitations to events sent by the App itself, along with *Courrier International's* partners. They can create an account to access additional free services such as the "My Correspondence" section and newsletters, and control their connection status to disconnect from their account, in Figure 2 (Courrier International, 2023). They can choose to accept or reject notifications and the App lets them customize its interface to a certain extent by choosing text size and background color, in Figure 2 (Courrier International, 2023). These personalization options allow users to create a news experience tailored to them. This control over their settings gives them a sense of ownership over the type of communications they wish to receive. They can choose what best matches their interests and what seems most relevant to them, keeping them engaged in their reading experience and trusting the App. By allowing users to specify their preferences in terms of privacy protection, the data they are prepared to share and the level of personalization they wish to receive, the App reassures users. This preference management allows them to limit privacy risks and gives them a sense of control over the information they share, which inspires trust, as theorized by Friedman et al. (2000). However, if users have the option of not signing up for certain services, they are nonetheless regularly

reminded to do so. Each time users open the App, an advertising message, in Figure 3 (Courrier International, 2023), encourages them to subscribe. These incentives, such as the “I subscribe button” next to the profile and at the bottom of every article, extend to the horoscope section, which features a message stating "the stars also advise following the news on *Courrier International* by subscribing now", in Figure 3 (Courrier International, 2023). These reminders to subscribe can be perceived as an intrusion into the reader's private space or an incentive to consume, undermining the trust placed in the App by customers.

Overall, the App leverages personalization to enhance user experience and foster trust within its App. By offering a user-centered experience and providing some personalized services as well as options for users to manage their preferences and privacy settings, the App demonstrates a commitment to catering to individual needs and preferences. However, the App lacks in certain aspects of personalization as it does not currently provide personalized content suggestions based on individual reading habits. This limitation means that users may not experience the full extent of content personalization. Despite this limitation, the App's efforts in personalization contribute to a more engaging and user-centric experience, allowing users to feel more connected to the content and in control of their data. By empowering users with tailored content options, the App builds a foundation of trust and credibility, reinforcing its position as a trustworthy source of news for its audience.

### 4.3 RQ3. To what extent does *Courrier International* utilize interactivity within the App to convey trust?

Thirdly, the App offers some degree of trust through interactivity (Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282) via a certain level of engagement with news content and engagement with the App stakeholders. The engagement with news content remains limited as the user-generated content is restricted on the App. Although users can share articles, they cannot redirect to social networks. The engagement with the App stakeholders is more extended, with access to experts, journalists and customers features, as well as off-brand indicators. However, interactive features regarding the assessment of the App through third party certifications and peer reviews are not available, limiting the potential for trust through the interactivity that the App could convey.

The possible engagement of users with the App's news content is present to a limited extent as the App does not enable user-generated content. Users cannot actively participate in communication channels nor engage with media content by leaving comments or likes, expressing their opinions or taking part in polls or discussion forums directly on the App, as it is recommended by researchers (Aharoni et al., 2022; Doudaki & Spyridou, 2014, p.261; Grosser, 2016, p.1044; Kiesow et al., 2021, p.973; Nozal et al., 2017, p.1270; Ross Arguedas et al., 2023, p.13).

Users do not either have access to *Courrier International's* social networks from the App (Toff et al., 2020, p.14), limiting their sense of community and the credibility of the App (Burlison Mackay & Lowrey, 2011, p.54). Even the 'Stories' section of the App, in Figure 10 (*Courrier International*, 2023), which features content similar to *Courrier International's* Instagram account, does not provide a link to that account.

The only interactive feature on the App regarding engagement with news content is the possibility for users to easily share the articles they want with their contacts via a sharing option to different platforms, such as social networks, email or other communication channels like WhatsApp or Messenger. This sharing functionality creates an immersive reading experience, reinforcing the perception of the App as a trusted news platform, as theorized by Fletcher & Park (2017, p.1282). Therefore, although the *Courrier International* App offers some engagement features, certain aspects of interactivity are not fully exploited.

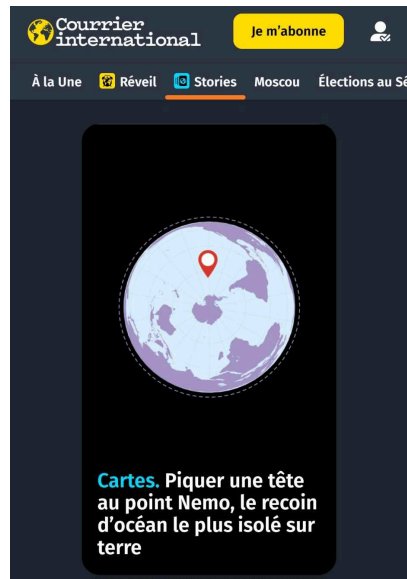


Figure 10: Screenshot of the App “Stories” section.

Beyond the limited interactivity functions enabling users to engage with news content, the App seems to offer more interactivity concerning functions engaging readers with the App's stakeholders, notably journalists, customer service and the offline brand itself. The App gives users access to experts via translated interviews easily accessible from the articles section of the App, in Figure 1 (Courrier International, 2023). Users can engage with journalists directly as they have access, through an entire page (Courrier International, n.d.-d) dedicated to *Courrier International's* team, to the contact information, names, departments and specializations of all members of the newspaper's team. Although there is no possibility of instant conversation, this provided information still enables readers to develop a personal relationship with these personalities, creating trust in the news content (Burlison Mackay & Lowrey, 2011, p.53).

In addition, the App offers accessible customer support features, enabling users to engage with the customer service and addressing user concerns promptly (Benbasat et al., 2008, p.9). In the settings, in Figure 2 (Courrier International, 2023), a help and support section features a FAQ (Courrier International, n.d.-c) with dedicated articles about subscriptions, logging in, benefits, etc. The App also maintains open lines of communication with its users by providing contact information by email where users can report problems or make requests, even though there is no live chat between users and customer service.

Plus, the App incorporates elements of *Courrier International's* offline brand to reinforce the confidence of online users by transferring its reputation and the trust it encompasses to the App (Grosser, 2016, p. 1043). The "Weekly" section, in Figure 11 (Courrier International, 2023), presents a digitized version of the printed newspaper of the week, the newspaper's logo is identical with only adjustments regarding its colors on the App, and the typography and graphic charter are the same online and offline. This creates visual continuity between the digital elements and the print version, reinforcing brand identification. These interactive elements boost user confidence, by giving them the

opportunity to develop a more personal relationship with the stakeholders involved in the App, whether it is authors to benefit from in-depth comments and context on the issues addressed, customer support to provide feedback that enhances user satisfaction or off-brand markers to restore brand identity and the trust it inspires.



Figure 11: Screenshot of the App “Weekly” section.

While the App offers some interactive features enabling users to engage to some extent with the content and stakeholders of the App, boosting their trust, it lacks options enabling them to evaluate the performance history and the trustworthiness of the App based on external and peer reviews as mentioned by Friedman et al. (2000) and Toff et al. (2021, p.5). Indeed, the App does not feature endorsements or certifications from third parties, such as seals of approval, other than the gender equality index highlighted in the legal notice (Courier International, n.d.-d). As users cannot view these trust-marks, they do not have access to any independent assessments of the App that could contribute to their trust (Chang et al., 2013; Friedman et al., 2000; Ross Arguedas et al., 2023, p.13).

Users cannot either give any testimonials or ratings directly through the App. Even though they can review the App on their application downloading platform, they cannot view, on the App, opinions of other users to evaluate their past experiences, nor can they interact with each other to form an opinion through peer reviews. Finally, users cannot assess articles via social proof, such as the number of likes, shares or comments on an article, as this information does not appear. This limitation in the scope for interactive user feedback prevents users from having access to social proves that could boost their trust in the App (Beldad & Hegner, 2017; Benbasat et al., 2008, p.9; Fletcher & Park, 2017, p.1282; Turilli et al., 2010, p.342).

To conclude, the App utilizes interactivity to enhance user engagement and foster trust with its audience by offering some interactive features such as easy article sharing, access to expert

interviews and journalists, responsive customer support and off-brand identity markers. Yet, the App falls short in enabling direct user participation through comments, polls, or discussion forums within its interface. The App does not currently offer these interactive features that could allow users to actively engage with the news content, or engage with each other to assess the trustworthiness of the App. This limitation means that users do not have the opportunity to directly contribute their opinions or engage in discussions within the App, limiting the sense of community and trust for the audience.

## 5. Conclusion

*Courrier International* implements the notion of trust in its App through various strategies and affordances related to transparency, personalization and interactivity. The App prioritizes transparency through its journalistic practices by providing clear references to sources and offering detailed information on its editorial process. It communicates in a transparent way by openly discussing privacy policies and providing some information on the business model of the App, especially its services. This transparent approach builds credibility and empowers users to make informed decisions. *Courrier International* then enhances trust by offering personalization to its users through a user-centered experience using accessible language and design, providing personalized content tailored for a French audience, allowing users to manage their preferences and privacy settings. While the App provides some customized content and user control, it lacks advanced personalization features such as customized recommendations according to user's reading habits. Finally, the App tends to foster trust through some interactive features such as easy article sharing, access to experts, and responsive customer support without however offering direct user participation features like comments and discussion within the App nor enabling users to assess the App through peer reviews.

The findings regarding *Courrier International's* implementation of trust-building strategies in its App are insightful for understanding how a digital news translation platform can enhance transparency, personalization, and interactivity affordances and strategies to build user trust. This report provides *Courrier International* with the opportunity to evaluate its own strategies in terms of building trust in its App and, perhaps, to put in place additional measures in terms of personalized content or the possibility of interaction directly on the App, for example. By examining *Courrier International's* approach to these key elements, stakeholders in the digital media industry can gain valuable insights into best practices that could serve as a blueprint for fostering trust on their own digital platforms, enhancing user experience, and maintaining credibility in online journalism applications. Nonetheless, it is important to critically evaluate the generalizability of the findings and consider that external factors, such as changes in technology or consumer behavior, may impact the conclusions drawn in the study. The strategies implemented by *Courrier International* on its App to generate trust among its users may not have the same relevance to another community, in another context or for another platform.

The walkthrough analysis method used in the research provides a detailed examination of the App, focusing on three main affordances: transparency, personalization, and interactivity. The walkthrough analysis conducted led to a comprehensive evaluation of the user interface, navigation menus, layout design, and visual elements of the App to identify user-friendly features, intuitive design choices, and accessibility options that contribute to a positive user experience. Walking through the App enables the researcher to assess the various features offered, such as personalization

options, interactivity elements, content categorization, and customization settings. This helped in understanding how these features contribute to user engagement and trust-building within the App. The method allowed an in-depth evaluation of how the content is presented to users and how it aligns with the platform's trust-building strategies. However, while this method offers valuable insights into the user experience and features of the App, there are certain aspects that may not have been fully captured. For instance, it does not delve into performance metrics such as loading times, responsiveness, App stability, and technical issues that could impact user trust and satisfaction. Plus, while a walkthrough analysis focuses on the specific App being reviewed, it does not provide a comparative analysis with similar news applications in the market.

Therefore, this research and detailed examination of the App features could be supplemented by further ones to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies. Conducting performance testing and monitoring user analytics could add to the evaluation of the App's reliability and performance. Understanding how *Courrier International's* trust-building strategies stack up against competitors can offer valuable insights for further improvement and differentiation. Hence, looking at user feedback, engagement metrics, and comparative studies with other news applications could provide additional insights into the App's trustworthiness and user satisfaction levels. Additionally, the walkthrough analysis carried out was based on the free version of the App. For further research, it would certainly be interesting to also study the paid version of the App, which is accessible by subscription, to determine to what extent and if, in addition to having access to more articles and being able to read them offline, as promoted in its advertising, this version also establishes other or more trust markers when people pay for its news service.



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