

“THE LITTLE TIGER GOES TO SCHOOL”: A MEDIA-EDUCATIONAL ANALYSIS OF ONLINE GAMBLING GAMES THROUGH THE USE OF AI

“O TIGRINHO VAI À ESCOLA”: UMA ANÁLISE MÍDIA-EDUCATIVA DOS JOGOS DIGITAIS DE AZAR A PARTIR DO USO DA IA

“EL TIGRECITO VA A LA ESCUELA”: UN ANÁLISIS MEDIOS-EDUCATIVO DE LOS JUEGOS DIGITALES DE AZAR A PARTIR DEL USO DE LA IA



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ABSTRACT: This article presents an analysis of online gambling games, exploring the potential and limitations of ChatGPT Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a possible educational technological artifact. It adopts an exploratory approach that integrates academic production on media-education (ME), institutional documents, and empirical experience derived from the use of AI. The results indicate that, when considering AI as a potentially educational artifact, it contributed to the development of critical and creative media pedagogical practices, albeit with some limitations. However, to build meaningful knowledge in the context of digital culture, constant dialogue with the specialized literature on ME proved necessary. Thus, an educational environment was created in which AI played a relevant role in problematizing.

KEYWORDS: Media-education. Online gambling games. Artificial intelligence. Teacher education.

RESUMO: Este artigo apresenta uma análise sobre os jogos digitais de azar, explorando as potencialidades e limitações da Inteligência Artificial (IA) ChatGPT como possível artefato tecnológico educacional. Adota uma abordagem exploratória que integra a produção acadêmica da mídia-educação (ME), documentos institucionais e a experiência empírica decorrente do uso da IA. Os resultados indicam que, ao considerar a IA como um artefato potencialmente educativo, houve contribuições para o desenvolvimento de práticas pedagógicas midiáticas críticas e criativas, ainda que com algumas limitações. Contudo, para a construção de saberes significativos no contexto da cultura digital, revelou-se necessário o diálogo constante com a literatura especializada em ME. Dessa forma, constituiu-se um ambiente educativo no qual a IA desempenhou um papel relevante na problematização dos jogos digitais de azar, sob a perspectiva da ME, assegurado pelo protagonismo do professor.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Mídia-educação. Jogos digitais de azar. Inteligência artificial. Formação de professores.

RESUMEN: Este artículo presenta un análisis sobre los juegos digitales de azar, explorando las potencialidades y limitaciones de la Inteligencia Artificial (IA) ChatGPT como un posible artefacto tecnológico educativo. Adopta un enfoque exploratorio que integra la producción académica sobre medios-educación (ME), documentos institucionales y la experiencia empírica derivada del uso de la IA. Los resultados indican que, al considerar la IA como un artefacto potencialmente educativo, se realizaron contribuciones al desarrollo de prácticas pedagógicas mediáticas críticas y creativas, aunque con algunas limitaciones. Sin embargo, para la construcción de saberes significativos en el contexto de la cultura digital, resultó necesario el diálogo constante con la literatura especializada en ME. De este modo, se constituyó un ambiente educativo en el cual la IA jugó un papel relevante en la problematización de los juegos digitales de azar, desde la perspectiva de la ME, asegurado por el protagonismo del docente.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Medios-educación. Juegos digitales de azar. Inteligencia artificial. Formación docente.

Introduction

In the twenty-first century, the global media environment has undergone a drastic transformation with the emergence of new technologies, media forms, and media practices (Buckingham, 2023). Media companies have expanded their strategies and profit-generating capacity. Within this context, digital gambling⁵ have gained increasing social relevance.

Also referred to as “online casinos,”⁶ these games are widely promoted by an extensive network of digital influencers, who frequently share on their Instagram stories supposedly exorbitant and rapid financial gains. Games such as Fortune Tiger, also known as “the little tiger game,” although illegal and prohibited in Brazil, have gained notoriety in recent years, capturing the public imagination through promises of what are perceived as easy financial rewards.

It is important to highlight that the prevalence of gambling practices is, globally, two to four times higher among adolescents than among adults. A study conducted by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF, 2022) indicates that 20% of the young people surveyed exhibit compulsive gambling behavior, and that 22% reported placing their first bet on digital gambling games at the age of 11 or younger. These data underscore the growing exposure and vulnerability of children and adolescents to this type of practice.

In light of these considerations, this article aims to problematize digital games of chance and to present possible contributions toward digital educational mediation with children and adolescents. From a methodological standpoint, our empirical exploration involved interactions with an Artificial Intelligence (AI) system—Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (ChatGPT). Media education (ME) was adopted as the theoretical and analytical framework, particularly with regard to its creative and critical pedagogical dimensions.

ME is a field of teaching, research, and intervention that seeks to critically examine media from an educational perspective, grounded in critical and creative competencies (Sousa; Borges; Colpas, 2020). Critical education represents an initial step in this process, fostering careful reflection and interpretation of media beyond purely methodological or technological dimensions. Creative education, in turn, aims to use technological resources for the productive

⁵ In Brazil, games of chance are those that link the winning of prizes to the player's luck, and because they are programmed to be addictive and almost always result in losses for bettors. In this article, we refer to these games in digital format, which are a constant presence in contemporary society.

⁶ The term “online casino,” as defined by the Alana Institute, is used in this article to refer to services and products available on the internet that constitute a form of gambling, allowing users to bet on digital versions of games similar to slot machines.

and active construction of knowledge, approaching them through the lens of language and valuing technological forms of expression.

Aligned with the concept of a reflective school, we understand competence as the ability to mobilize knowledge to act in specific situations, which necessarily requires the acquisition of knowledge (Alarcão, 2008). As Buckingham (2023) argues, media companies wield considerable power, and much of what they do remains obscure and invisible. Nevertheless, there are educational pathways that enable users to critically counteract this power. Motivated by this perspective, we treat AI as a potential educational technological artifact, aiming to foster training that enables resistance to digital games of chance through digital media themselves, mediated by ME. This initiative to integrate AI critically and creatively into educational and research processes stems from an understanding articulated by several authors (Buckingham, 2023) and reaffirmed in an article authored by us and published in 2024 (Lima; Sousa; Borges, 2024).

To support this reflection, we also draw on journalistic reports and documents produced by international organizations, such as UNICEF, which have adopted a critical stance toward digital gambling. In this paper, we advocate for the reconfiguration of educational and research processes through digital media, prioritizing creative, innovative, and critical approaches. One illustrative example is the critical positioning against the automatic generation of answers, texts, and assignments by ChatGPT (Barbosa; Portes, 2023).

In addition to these introductory propositions, the article is organized into four main sections. The first section addresses the theoretical aspects that underpin the study, particularly concerning digital games of chance. The second section presents the methodological framework of the research. The third section focuses on the presentation and discussion of data obtained through AI, alongside theoretical aspects of ME. Finally, the fourth section offers the concluding remarks.

Brief considerations on digital games of chance

It is estimated that games of chance have been present in society since around 3000 BCE, generating interest across social, political, and legal spheres, as well as prompting the need for pedagogical strategies within the educational field. Oliveira (2019) notes that, despite this long historical trajectory, scientific studies in Brazil that explore this topic in depth remain scarce.

According to the literature, popular interest in games of chance is often associated with the illusion of rapid enrichment and the sense of well-being generated by the release of the neurotransmitter dopamine, producing what may be described as dopaminergic addiction. The stimuli offered by these games lie primarily in the possibility of rapid gains or losses—that is, the chance to reach either peak success or complete ruin within seconds or through just a few clicks (Fajardo, 2024).

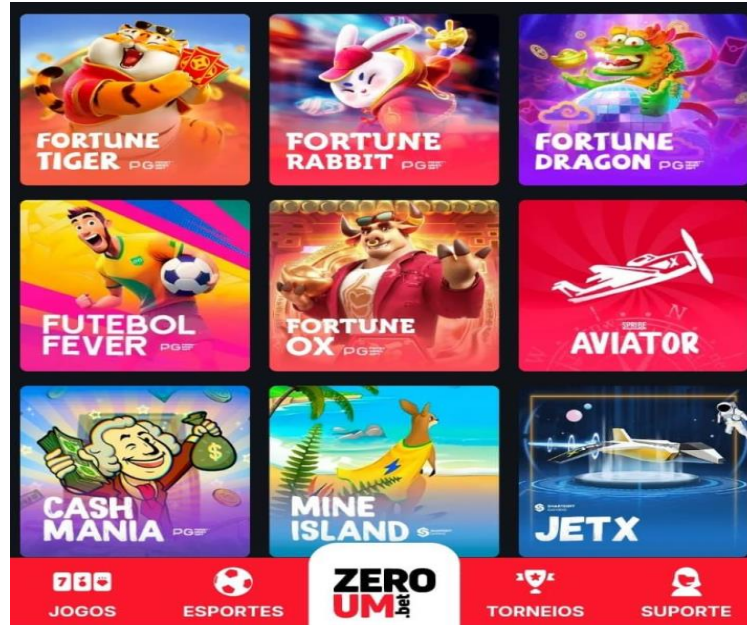
This phenomenon is further intensified by a range of interpersonal factors, such as the pursuit of significant economic change. Consequently, players may be seeking anything from immediate or long-term financial solutions to escapism from social or personal difficulties, or even merely momentary pleasure (Oliveira, 2019).

Omais (2009) emphasizes that although gambling is often perceived by the general population as a form of leisure and entertainment, its consequences can be as severe as those associated with the consumption of psychoactive substances. To reach this conclusion, the author considered physical, social, and emotional impacts. In this regard, Oliveira (2019) underscores the need to establish regulations for these practices in order to mitigate behavioral compulsion and the associated social harms.

In 2024, operations conducted by the Civil Police across several Brazilian states reinforced the perception of severity and the need for educational mediation regarding gambling. The targets of these operations were digital influencers who encouraged their followers to place bets on digital gambling games, often allegedly involved in illegal practices such as money laundering and even connections with criminal organizations. In 2025, many of these influencers were summoned to testify before the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on BETs, whose primary objective is to investigate the impacts of betting and gaming platforms on the budgets of Brazilian families.

Digital games of chance such as *Fortune Tiger*, *Fortune Rabbit*, *Fortune Dragon*, *Futebol Lever*, *Fortune Ox*, *Aviator*, among others, have gone viral in recent years and captured the imagination of children and adolescents. Their advertising messages are disseminated through vibrant animations and cartoon-like characters, including little tigers, rabbits, airplanes, football players, and gold coins.

Figure 1 – Digital games of chance and their appeal to children and adolescents



Source: Google Images.

Cartoons are widely recognized as graphic and, at times, audiovisual resources belonging to the child and adolescent universe, as highlighted by the National Council for Advertising Self-Regulation (Conar). Frequently presented through anthropomorphized animals, dolls, or animations, these resources have the power to arouse children’s curiosity and attention, contributing to the formation of moral values or habits. Within this context, digital games of chance fail to comply with the principle of protecting children and adolescents when developing and disseminating their advertising. This principle has been required by Conar since 2008 (Conjur, 2008).

Along these lines, the Alana Institute—a well-established child protection organization with 30 years of activity in Brazil—reported to the Public Prosecutor’s Office of the State of São Paulo the existence of several Brazilian profiles of “child influencers” who are victims of commercial exploitation. According to the Institute, profiles owned by individuals aged between 6 and 17 are being enticed by betting websites to promote their platforms. As a result, these practices encourage gambling among their followers, who are predominantly children and adolescents, thus becoming new victims of this form of exploitation (Alana, 2024).

Resolution No. 163 of the National Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (Conanda) emphasizes that the presence of “child presenters” in advertising content is a factor that heightens the risk of abusively inducing children to consume. While monitoring the profiles of child influencers on Instagram, the Alana Institute observed the promotion of “online

casinos” through stories and feeds, consistently accompanied by links redirecting users to betting platforms. Moreover, feedback from child and adolescent followers revealed that many began gambling as a direct result of this influence.

To illustrate the impact of this practice on youth, Fajardo (2024) reports that young beneficiaries of the “Pé-de-meia” program—an initiative of the Brazilian Federal Government that provides a monthly stipend of R\$200.00 to high school students—have been using this benefit to place online bets. The relationship between financial losses in gambling and the persistent desire to continue betting is evidenced by Gabriel, a 16-year-old adolescent, in an interview with a major Brazilian newspaper: “[...] the more I lost, the more I woke up wanting to play again to try to recover it. This is not good—you become addicted. I ended up losing R\$400.00” (Fajardo, 2024).

Therefore, the implementation of norms through political and legal systems is essential for organizing and regulating society, while also enabling state revenue collection. In this regard, interventions in the educational field—focused on critical and creative digital education—are fundamental to raising awareness about gambling, especially within the school environment, which constitutes a privileged space for such intervention given the vulnerability of children and adolescents to these practices. Accordingly, our proposal is grounded in critical and creative digital education, with an emphasis on ME and AI technologies.

Since the 1990s, media regulatory governments worldwide have increasingly supported the idea of media education. Almost all endorse it, although the definition is often vague and subject to diverse interpretations (Buckingham, 2023). In response, we chose to adopt ME as our approach, recognizing that this field of teaching, research, and extension has been problematized since the 1960s and has been legitimized by academic literature and by international organizations such as UNESCO (Belloni, 2022). From this perspective, the following section is devoted to outlining our methodological trajectory.

Methodology

This study is characterized by an exploratory approach, in which the responses generated by ChatGPT 4.1 to our guiding research question were considered as the corpus, focusing on digital games of chance and possible didactic-pedagogical digital educational contributions. Central to this process was the establishment of dialogue with the literature,

particularly in relation to ME, as well as with journalistic reports and institutional documents related to online casinos.

Our exploratory methodology involving AI, inspired by a recent text authored by us (Lima; Sousa; Borges, 2024), was structured through a dialogue with ChatGPT. The investigative focus centered on problematizing digital games of chance from an educational perspective, based on the AI’s responses and grounded theoretically in ME, with emphasis on its critical and creative dimensions. In this sense, the chatbot theoretically assumed part of the authorship of this text from a creative media perspective, while we directed questions that ME would also characterize as critical (Sousa; Borges; Colpas, 2020).

Following the model adopted in our first article (Lima; Sousa; Borges, 2024), we positioned ourselves as researchers with the aim of conducting pedagogical research related to digital games of chance, children and adolescents, and education. After this introduction, we addressed additional questions of interest connected to the topic under analysis. The content generated through the dialogue with the chatbot was subjected to focused coding (Thomas, 2006) using the qualitative analysis software ATLAS.ti, which:

[...] involves reading and classifying content based on problem-questions. The responses generate temporary labels (codes) through which paragraphs are identified. After the initial reading, the codes are reviewed and filtered in an effort to avoid repetitive categories. At the end of this process, these labels are organized into broader thematic groups directly associated with the research questions (Bitencourt, 2021, p. 368, our translation).

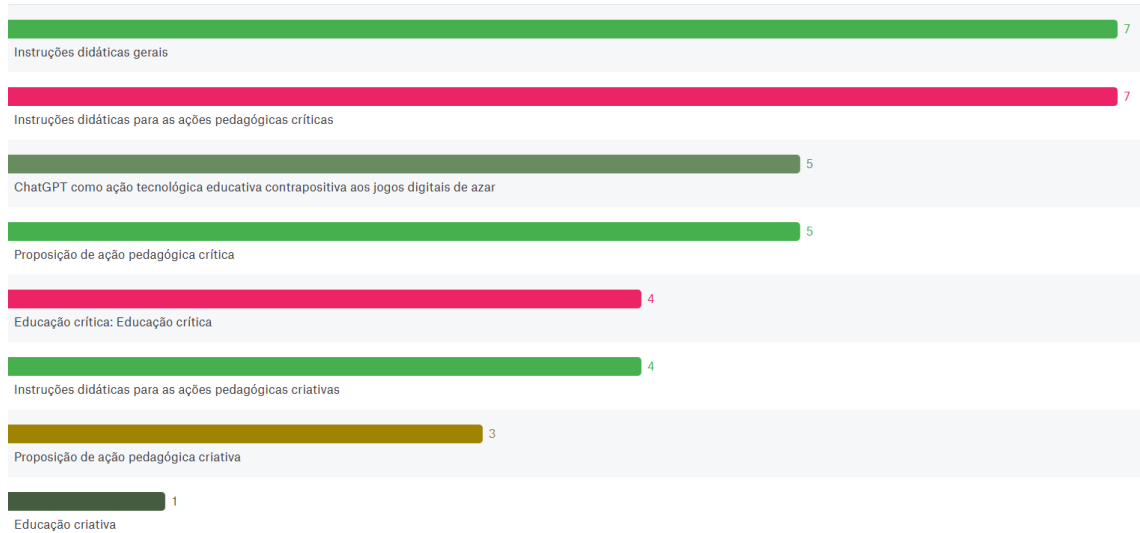
Our research question, posed to the AI, focused on pedagogical strategies aimed at educating both critically and creatively, inspired by ME and its theoretical-pedagogical dimensions. We addressed the following question to ChatGPT: “ChatGPT, how can I educate my students critically and creatively to counter digital games of chance, with you as a research partner and a technological artifact to be used and explored?” The results obtained are presented below.

Results and Discussion

An Initial Overview

The indicators provided by the chatbot are summarized by frequency in Graph 1, generated by the ATLAS.ti software:

Graph 1 – Incidence of results presented by the ai, according to the thematic group of educating ‘critically’ and ‘creatively’ to counter digital games of chance



Source: Authors' compilation via ATLAS.ti (2025).

Initiating the problematization of the data, most of the content in ChatGPT's responses was oriented toward general didactic information and didactic guidance for pedagogical actions. These categories were developed in a broad and introductory manner by the AI, with the aim of emphasizing the relevance and justification of specific strategies in media education processes or in raising awareness about digital games of chance. The approach adopted by the chatbot sought to provide an initial framework for the teacher-researcher, offering a justified foundation and directions for the development of pedagogical practices. Let us consider the following.

Response 1: Educating students in a critical and creative manner so that they can reflect on the impacts of digital games of chance is an important and relevant challenge in the current context, especially given the growing presence of these games in young people's digital lives. To this end, it is necessary to create a learning environment that combines critical reflection with the development of creative skills, using tools such as ChatGPT to foster research, analysis, and discussion.

Response 2: To stimulate a critical approach, it is important for students to analyze not only the impacts of gambling but also how these platforms operate and employ psychological strategies to attract and retain players.

Response 3: This approach develops the ability to seek information from diverse sources, evaluate arguments, and form well-grounded opinions.

The first response highlights the relevance of the topic in light of the increasing presence of gambling in young people's digital lives. It emphasizes the importance of articulating critical reflection with the development of creative skills, using technological tools such as ChatGPT to stimulate research and debate. This approach aligns with contemporary pedagogical perspectives that view technological mediation as a resource for enhancing educational processes, provided it is used with formative intentionality (Fantin; Martins, 2023).

The second response deepens the critical dimension by suggesting that students analyze not only the impacts of digital games of chance but also the mechanisms employed by these platforms to attract and retain players through psychological control. These aspects relate to didactic-pedagogical strategies of media education, in which understanding the marketing strategies used by digital entertainment industries is essential for fostering more informed and conscious student development (Buckingham, 2023). From Fantin's (2006) perspective, this strategy is strengthened through creative deepening, in which students "create" media themselves, thereby gaining a more profound understanding of how it operates.

Finally, the third response emphasizes the development of students' capacity to seek information from diverse sources, evaluate arguments, and construct opinions through comparison. This perspective reinforces the importance of information literacy, which enables students not only to access content but also to compare and critically interpret it, distinguishing between reliable and unreliable information across multiple sources (Buckingham, 2023).

Thus, the data analysis shows that the chatbot's responses approximate media-educational pedagogical elements grounded in critical thinking about contemporary digital dynamics, while also engaging with creative aspects—an issue that will be further examined in the next section. On the other hand, the discourse produced by the chatbot displays a prescriptive tone, marked by the frequent use of expressions such as "it is necessary" and "it is important." According to Lima, Sousa, and Borges (2024), this characteristic can be mitigated depending on how questions are formulated by the teacher-researcher, especially when accompanied by more explanatory information and context, although this does not entirely eliminate ChatGPT's prescriptive tendency.

It is worth noting, following Lima, Sousa, and Borges (2024), that the overall quality of data reveals that the responses generated by AI systems, such as the chatbot analyzed here, depend directly on the precision with which questions are formulated. In this sense, question design is a critical element in ensuring that responses align with the pedagogical objectives defined by the teacher, even while acknowledging the inherent directionality of AI systems.

When introducing a question, it is imperative that educators understand the underlying concepts and implications of the topic, as well as how to structure the question so that the AI can provide the most relevant and contextually appropriate response. This perspective underscores that interaction with AI systems should not be viewed as a passive process, but rather as an exchange that requires educators to possess not only content mastery but also the ability to engage AI qualitatively. In short, the use of AI in educational contexts demands more than merely inputting data or generic questions; it requires an ongoing critical commitment to the content being addressed, ensuring that AI-generated responses are not only technically accurate but also pedagogically meaningful and aligned with educational purposes.

Continuing the data analysis, another significant category identified involved the perception of ChatGPT as a potential tool for counter-hegemonic educational technological action against digital games of chance, thus valuing the creative perspective of ME. Once again, the AI understood that it should offer suggestions for pedagogical work using ChatGPT, this time employing the verb “can” as a form of pedagogical guidance (emphasis added):

Response 1: For this part, **you can** involve ChatGPT in the creation of interactive materials, such as quizzes, reflective questionnaires, or group discussions about the points presented.

Response 2: **You can use** ChatGPT to generate ideas and conduct research on innovative practices in the creation of games that do not involve betting, promoting challenges and rewards based on skill and knowledge.

Response 3: Independent research is an excellent way to develop students’ critical thinking. **You can use** ChatGPT to support students in information gathering by helping them formulate questions, search for scientific articles, or create a list of reliable sources on digital gambling and its impacts.

First, the proposal to involve ChatGPT in the creation of interactive materials—such as quizzes, questionnaires, or group discussions—demonstrates how AI can be used instrumentally and creatively as a teaching tool. The use of ChatGPT in the creation of educational games that do not involve betting, but instead promote knowledge-based challenges, offers a creative alternative, although the relationship between challenge and reward may approximate technicist practices and distance itself from a critical framework.

Finally, the suggestion to use ChatGPT to support students’ research can align with both critical and creative conceptions. Student-led research contributes to learners becoming protagonists in their own learning processes, developing investigative and analytical skills. By using ChatGPT to assist in information gathering, question formulation, and source

identification, students have the opportunity to enhance their research competencies. Nonetheless, caution is warranted regarding the prescriptive tendency already identified in ChatGPT, which can be mediated by the teacher through dialogue and guidance with students.

The creation of a list of sources on topics such as the impacts of digital gambling, generated by the chatbot, provides students with a starting point to question ChatGPT itself as a reliable—or unreliable—source, thereby reinforcing the teacher’s media-educational guidance in cases of potential AI error or bias. In this context, ChatGPT functions not merely as an informational support tool, but as one among many possible sources on a given topic, whose responses can be questioned and compared with academic literature and with the teacher’s own knowledge. It is noteworthy that the chatbot itself proposes this critical stance.

Considering what has been problematized thus far, together with the remaining categories, it becomes evident that the approach adopted in the guiding research question resulted in chatbot responses characterized by strong semantic coherence, accompanied by critical and creative elaborations on digital games of chance. This pattern reveals the formation of two major groups of categories: (i) critical education and (ii) creative education. Table 1 below simplifies and expands the visualization of these groups.

Table 1 – Groups of Responses

Critical Education	Creative Education
a) Propositions and critical pedagogical actions.	a) Propositions for creative pedagogical actions.
b) Didactic instructions for critical pedagogical actions.	b) Didactic instructions for creative pedagogical actions.

Source: Authors (2025).

The first major group of categories was subdivided into: (a) propositions and critical pedagogical actions and (b) didactic instructions for critical pedagogical actions. In turn, the second group was structured into: (a) propositions for creative pedagogical actions and (b) didactic instructions for creative pedagogical actions. In the following section, we address the specific discussion of these major groups and their subdivisions.

Educating critically and creatively to counter gambling: a media-educational perspective

These developments present a didactic structure that combines both critical and creative thinking, allowing ChatGPT’s responses to serve as a starting point for the construction of pedagogical practices aligned with ME. The data analysis therefore suggests that the chatbot was able not only to generate a general understanding of the topics under discussion, but also to propose specific pathways and guidelines for implementing pedagogical actions that are both critical and creative. These actions are organized into distinct lines of action, systematized in Table 2 below:

Table 2 – Propositions for actions and their lines of action according to ATLAS.ti

Propositions for critical pedagogical actions and didactic instructions	Propositions for creative pedagogical actions and didactic instructions
a) Contextualization and awareness of digital games of chance; b) Deconstruction of game mechanisms; c) Development of critical thinking through research; d) Promotion of personal commitment.	a) Development of creative skills.

Source: Authors (2025).

Regarding the first critical line of action, “Contextualization and awareness of digital games of chance,” the chatbot suggested that the analysis of digital gambling should involve a critical examination of its implications across multiple domains, particularly psychological, social, and economic. According to the AI, it is essential that students understand the definition of these games before engaging more deeply with their consequences. Beyond a basic definition, the concept of addiction associated with gambling must be discussed in depth.

The mechanics of these games exploit players’ psychological vulnerabilities, creating an illusion of control over outcomes—an effect that, in digital games, is intensified by platform design that encourages repetitive behavior. The combination of unrestricted access, reward systems, and the absence of physical controls (such as those found in traditional casinos) increases the risk of addiction. This dynamic leads to cognitive overload among players, who may struggle to recognize signs of dependency, thereby exacerbating psychological consequences (Fajardo, 2024).

From a broader perspective, ChatGPT also emphasized that the social implications of digital gambling cannot be overlooked. The impact on individuals’ and families’ lives should

be highlighted through real cases of addiction, financial loss, and the breakdown of relationships. The use of evidence drawn from testimonies of affected individuals is recommended as a way to humanize the discussion, demonstrating how the phenomenon extends beyond entertainment and becomes a sociopolitical and pedagogical issue, with repercussions in the field of public health, as also noted by Omais (2009), Oliveira (2019), and Buckingham (2023).

The second critical line of action, “Deconstruction of game mechanisms,” was grounded in the importance of understanding engagement and addiction mechanics, marketing strategies, and ethical issues in digital gambling. It is well established that these games are intentionally designed to maximize player retention on platforms, employing sophisticated behavioral psychology techniques that exploit human tendencies (Fajardo, 2024).

Practices such as variable rewards, loot boxes (monetization mechanisms), and constant notifications are recurrent strategies that create cycles of anticipation and gratification, making it difficult to interrupt gambling behavior. Variable rewards, for example, operate similarly to intermittent reinforcement schedules, intensifying the desire to repeat behavior in order to “win” more. This not only increases engagement time but also fosters dependency patterns. Such design choices, aimed at exploiting cognitive vulnerabilities, raise ethical, moral, and social concerns regarding digital gambling, as discussed by Buckingham (2023).

Moreover, as previously noted, the marketing of digital gambling has a seductive and troubling dimension, particularly on social media platforms. Developers rely on digital influencers to promote these games in ways that make them appear harmless or even advantageous, thereby concealing the risks involved. The association with influencers—often young themselves—can create a false sense of belonging or “normality” around the practice, making the target audience, predominantly young and vulnerable, more susceptible to engaging in risky behaviors (Alana, 2024).

On social media, this approach is frequently disguised as entertainment, obscuring the harmful aspects of these games, such as the addictions that may be triggered by a seemingly innocent play. The use of advertisements aimed at young audiences and the appeal to influencers with large followings raise a critical debate about the industry’s responsibility regarding consumers’ mental health and well-being (Alana, 2024).

The third critical line of action highlights that the development of critical thinking through research is one of the fundamental pillars in educating students who are capable of questioning, analyzing, and understanding the complexities of contemporary issues, such as

digital gambling. Independent research enables students not only to acquire knowledge, but also to learn how to identify reliable sources, formulate questions, and critically evaluate information. The use of tools such as ChatGPT can be beneficial in this process, also contributing to the development of creative potential.

Research activities in which students investigate topics such as the psychological impact of gambling, the regulation of online gambling in different countries, or the techniques used to manipulate players' behavior are cited as examples. Another suggestion involves searching for scientific articles, publication abstracts, or even generating ideas for new perspectives on the impacts of digital gambling, in line with what is advocated by Buckingham (2023).

The fourth and final category points to reflection and action, aiming to promote students' personal commitment to healthy technology use and awareness of the impact of digital gambling on their own lives and communities. Personal tasks in which students reflect on their own digital consumption habits allow for an in-depth analysis of how they relate to these games. Questions such as "Have you ever been affected by any type of digital addiction?" or "What can you do to protect yourself or help others avoid the risks of digital gambling?" encourage, according to ChatGPT, introspection that may lead to greater self-awareness and more responsible practices in the future.

At the end of this reflective process, the AI suggests that students develop individual or collective action plans aimed at promoting healthy digital consumption and preventing gambling addiction. These plans also contribute to creative engagement in building a more conscious digital environment.

The only creative line of action directly proposed was the development of creative skills. In this dimension, ChatGPT emphasized the importance of stimulating students' creativity and guiding them toward alternatives that offer both individual and social benefits. In this context, one of the most productive approaches, according to the AI, is encouraging the creation of projects that propose ethical digital games.

Ethical or awareness-oriented educational games can contribute to exploring the digital environment as a space for education and the development of creative competencies. In dialogue with Buckingham's (2023) perspective within media education, it is important for students to question how games can be designed to promote learning, empathy, and cooperation, rather than merely competition and the pursuit of immediate gratification. Finally, fostering debates on ethical game design is a way to reintegrate critical and creative perspectives, a principle widely advocated in ME (Fantin, 2006).

In summary, according to Buckingham (2023), critical and creative media education must entail a deep understanding of how media function, how they communicate, how they represent the world, and how they are produced and used, because:

[...] the challenge of media education and media literacy today is not 'only' to reflect and critically, ethically, and aesthetically analyze media and cultural uses, consumption, and practices, nor 'only' to help children and young people reduce screen or smartphone use, for example, still centering the argument on the tool, but also to enable them to understand the system of social, economic, political, and cultural interrelationships of which we are part, shifting the focus to sociomateriality and emphasizing spaces of meaning, relationships, productions, and analyses as experiences of participation in the hybrid spaces of culture (Fantin; Martins, 2023, our translation).

For Buckingham (2023), these new media companies exercise considerable power, and much of what they do remains obscure and invisible. However, there are also limits to this power, as there are ways for users to challenge it. Critical education is a first step in this process, aimed at fostering careful reflection on media. Creative education, in turn, seeks to bring students closer to and through media, making them allies in the media-educational process.

Despite the importance of the creative proposition presented by the AI, there is a clear gap in directive creative aspects when compared to the critical dimension. Increasingly, the importance of integrating critical and creative competencies has been emphasized, as reflected in Law No. 14,533/2023 (Brazil, 2023), which establishes the National Digital Education Policy. This emphasis, however, is not clearly evident in the various non-directive critical and creative interactions observed throughout ChatGPT's responses.

In this regard, Fantin and Martins (2023) recall that Belloni (2022) highlighted media education as a proposal aimed at promoting communicative, expressive, and relational capacities, potentially fostering ethical and aesthetic reflection on media offerings, as well as encouraging production across different languages—an endeavor that requires valuing the creative dimension. When considering media education as a means of expanding and legitimizing formative horizons, the relevance of the teacher-researcher's role and their knowledge of the topic under investigation once again becomes evident.

Final Considerations

This study aimed to explore the potential and challenges of AI as a potentially educational technological artifact, specifically in its mediating relationship with digital gambling games within the school environment, where children and adolescents—primary targets of advertising by online casinos—are present. The analysis of ChatGPT's responses, mediated by Media Education (ME), highlighted the potential of this strategy for both critical and creative reflection in the teaching–learning process, while acknowledging its limitations and the need for continuous questioning.

The analysis underscored the need for constant mediation by the teacher, as well as support from the specialized literature in ME, which provides essential foundations for building a reflective educational environment in interactions with the chatbot. In this context, as guided by Libâneo (2002), it is essential to consider the levels of reflexivity that must be mediated by the teacher at the technological interface.

Finally, the study reinforces the need for an educational approach that goes beyond the merely instrumental and uncritical use of digital artifacts. Such an approach is necessary for the formation of students who, while using technologies, are also encouraged to question them. In line with the study's conclusions, it is reaffirmed that although technological innovations such as AI present both risks and educational potential, the role of the educator remains central and indispensable to the development of students' critical and creative thinking.

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