On the use of visual methodologies in educational policy research

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This article examines how visual methodologies might be incorporated into educational policy studies. By bringing together theoretical perspectives on critical policy studies and visual methodologies, we aim to demonstrate the ways in which the visual can be an important tool to help us interrogate how knowledge is produced through the constructions and representations of policy texts and discourses. In so doing, we suggest that the use of visual methodologies can help us to rethink policy, particularly in relation to studying social difference in globalizing conditions. While we focus here on one set of documents, the annual Global Monitoring Reports associated with Education For All (EFA), our aim overall is to highlight both the methodological and policy implications that could be applied to a variety of official texts.

Visual methodologies and policy research

Policy research over the last two decades has sought to develop new approaches to studying the social construction of knowledge in social and educational arenas (Ball, 2010; Morris, 2012; Gale, 2001). We build on this critical paradigm of policy research in order to study the emergence of new forms of knowledge that are formulated within the contemporary context of education. Using a case study of images in the Global Monitoring Reports of Education for All (EFA), we suggest that visual research can play a key role in sharpening policy analysis. This approach promises to provide educational research with a strategic tool to help transform the boundaries between theory and practice.

The history of visual studies and especially visual anthropology dates back to the late nineteenth century as a way to study the histories and images of non-western cultures. As Hartmann, Silvester & Hayes (1998) note, this work was typically done through the objectifying gaze of the western colonizers. More recently this objectifying approach has been rejected by researchers who take critical approaches to visual representations, and has been replaced by the emergence of multidisciplinary research which employs the subjective lens and which engages interpretative frameworks to interrogate mainstream discourses and knowledge production (Burke, 2001; Pink, 2006; Rose, 2001). Rose (2001) suggests that we study the meanings of images through our careful engagement with the details of the image. Her approach involves the analysis of images, including the context, content, and effects of the

images on viewers. To understand the meanings of the image, visual researchers look at the textual conventions that construct its meanings . These include the way the subject is shot and the gaze by which the image directs a particular way of seeing (Rose, 2001). This is what Rose (2001) refers to as the discursive formation of the image or discourse. In addition, the institutional conditions in which the image is produced, the kinds of knowledge that are constructed, as well as the effect of the image on the researcher or viewer, can also be key in visual analysis. Pink (2001, 2006) also argues that to interpret images we need to reflexively engage in understanding our own relationship with them. That is, our positioning as insider or outsider in relation to the culture in which the image is produced can play a central role in shaping our interpretations of the image. In this way, her method invites us to reflect on who we are when we interpret the meanings implicated in a visual text. She argues that visual studies are a "theoretically informed way of understanding social realities and of formulating and approaching questions, issues, and problems" (Pink, 2007:15). In short, a critical, engaging and reflexive approach to studying images and social change is central to visual interpretation.

In this essay we focus on the visual images that NGOs, ministries and global organizations include in official reports and campaigns. The decision to include particular images in various policy documents is clearly a deliberate choice made by those producing the documents. Our analysis points to the significance of underlying (and perhaps unarticulated) perspectives and themes, and we draw on other studies as well which have used visual methodologies to study the effects of visual representation on constructing social relationships in local and international campaigns related to issues such as HIV and AIDS and girls' education. Mitchell, Walsh & Larkin (2004), for example, study a publication produced by a South African NGO focusing on HIV and AIDS and the ways in which the inclusion of children's drawings in the text seems to frame young people as innocent children who should be protected from knowledge of sex rather than as active agents in relation to their own sexuality. Another study, conducted by Johnny & Mitchell (2006), interrogated the 2002-3 poster campaign Live and Let Live carried out by the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). This poster campaign was part of an international strategy to fight discrimination against individuals living with HIV and AIDS. Using a textual analysis which draws on the connotative and denotative meanings of images, Johnny & Mitchell (2006) conclude that the images run the risk of reinforcing cultural stereotypes, rather than combating such stereotypes. Following from this work, Magno & Kirk (2010) studied documents produced by the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) in order to look at representations of girls' education. Magno & Kirk's (2010) research focused on the relationships between girls who are the "subjects" of girls' education initiatives by development agencies and the wider global audience of reports, campaigns and general information about such girls. They were interested in exploring how these indirect and yet powerful relationships between the girls and producers and viewers are mediated or constructed by media, imagery, pre-existing understandings and assumptions.

Inspired by this work, we became interested in how visual methods might be applied to what is "seen and unseen" (Magno & Kirk, 2010:9) in images in other policy texts. As two researchers working in the area of international development, we were interested in the ways in which images (and not just the words) shape perspectives on the global agenda of education. For example, how is the rights-based discourse in international development represented through images of girls, children with disabilities, and ethnic minorities? Complementing the work of Harvey (1989) in sociological analysis, and Fairclough (1992) in the area of critical

discourse analysis, visual methods invite us to engage critically with the historical conditions within which a discourse is constructed, and develop a critical understanding of the meanings of the discourse. As we highlight here, visual methodologies provide us with a tool to question the theoretical implications of texts and discourses that are constructed behind a policy framework.

A case study: Governmentality and the representation of childhood in the EFA Global Monitoring Reports

To work with the institutional conditions of the images, we use the concept of governmentality, drawing from Foucault's (1991) theory of discourse and power. We have combined this concept with theories in postcolonial theories in order to study the representation of childhood in the EFA Global Monitoring Reports. The term "governmentality" here refers to the art of modern government that is fundamentally applied to the politics of governing the population within the emergence of modern societies[1] (Foucault, 1991). The term "government" is geared not only to the governing of states by juridical power, but also to the technologies of governance that operate in the local practices of institutions (Dean, 1999). Governmentality is associated with the emergence of modern power through the technologies of self-government. This form of power is referred to as bio-politics: the use of institutional forces to govern the subject's behaviour through a set of disciplines and techniques (Foucault, 1980a). For example, to govern, modern states have participated in shaping and handling the behaviour of populations through the use of management technologies such as the institutional control of contamination, the application of hygiene methods, and the institutionalization of compulsory education (Foucault, 1991; 2000; Dean, 1999; Rose, 2008). In this framing, the term discourse refers to a set of statements that function to define, regulate, and limit the object of knowledge. The discourse of madness, for instance, is historically produced by the rules of reason that shaped knowledge about the normal and abnormal, sane and insane, reason and madness. At the same time, discourse can function within the micro-practices of institutions to reconstitute power through the generation of institutional forces that are applied upon the individual (Foucault, 1975). For instance, the discourses and practices of psychology and management function as the kinds of knowledge that generate institutional forces to regulate and discipline behaviour. These technologies of government were then applied to govern the modern subject through the process of diagnosis and measurement of individual problems (Rose, 1999). The relationship between discourse, knowledge, and power constructs the modern individual through the normative judgement of institutions.

Postcolonial studies have drawn on Foucault's (1980b) notion of discourse to analyse the relationship between discourse and power in the global and local conditions (Hall, 1996; 2001). For example, Hall argues that "the West" is an *historical*, rather than geographical construct (1996:186). It came from a particular historical period with the break-up of feudalism in European societies, and its origin has been associated with the expansion of colonial conquest. The meaning of "the West", then, is identical to the meaning of the word "modern", which emerged as a consequence of shifting power relations between European empire and the movement of power towards the New World. This line of research also uses critical theory to point out the asymmetrical relationship between western and non-western societies. For example, Hall (1996) sees the dichotomy between "the West and the Rest" as a representation of asymmetrical relations of power that emerged as a consequence of the history of colo-

nialism. He sheds light on the ways this binary discourse constructs the images of non-western societies as poor and backward. In this case study, we focus on the ways governmentality, in a similar way, has constructed our understanding of childhood through the discourses of human rights and development. We argue that this represents the modern agenda of governance, shaping knowledge about childhood through the use of what might be described as visual politics.

Sample

Drawing from the EFA Global Monitoring Reports produced between 2002 and 2011, we sampled the 2003/4, 2008 and 2010 reports. In each report, images appear on the cover page and in in-text insertions. Our sample draws on various of EFA's publications: the Global Monitoring Report 2003/4 (*Gender and education for all: The leap to equality*);[2] the Global Monitoring Report 2008 (*Education for all by 2015: Will we make it?*);[3] and the Global Monitoring Report 2010 (*Reaching the marginalized*).[4] While we offer a more extensive analysis elsewhere of images from these reports (Nguyen & Mitchell, 2011), here we consider images from just two of the reports, 2008 and 2010.

Steps in studying the images

In order to approach the images in a systematic way we have devised a series of steps:

Step 1: Socio-historical analysis

We first study the context in which the images were taken. In the case of the images from the Global Monitoring Reports it is the socio-historical context of EFA itself and the ways that EFA was formulated to promote the inclusion of out-of-school children in the Global South. We draw on previous research to contextualize the global framework of EFA and the political agenda of EFA in social transformation from a postcolonial perspective (Hall, 1996).

Step 2: The images

Our method for step two draws on previous work by Kuhn (1995) and Moletsane & Mitchell (2007) in which the idea is to work with individual images. As Kuhn writes "A single photograph can serve as a basic tool, the raw material" (Kuhn, 1995:4). For each photograph, we draw on close-reading strategies, organized around questions related to the content of images (What is going on here? Who and what is in the picture? What is the viewer meant to look at?) and the context and effects of the images (Who is taking the images? What images and languages are used to frame the rights or equality discourse, and how they are used in relation to girls and disability? How are their meanings constructed through the images?) As Lutz & Collins (1993) in their work on images in the *National Geographic* highlight, the visual text is not neutral in the way it divides the world up (into "us" and "them"; "here" and "there"). The approach we take is interpretive, drawing attention as it does to the perceived meaning of particular visual signs contained with a series of images.[5] Each can be read both on its own and in a wider context.

Step 3: Theorizing in relation to the images

We then attempt to theorize how the material representations of particular images contribute to the broader questions under study. In this case, we are interested in how they might shape

our understanding of childhood through the representations of the images, in relation to the rights and development discourses. We discuss how governmentality reconstructs itself in neo-liberal policies on inclusion in education. The use of theory enables us to reflect on how images might have different meaning in different contexts, using different perspectives. This is important for critical policy analysis because it provides a methodological tool for thinking about and reflecting on power relations within the postcolonial context.

Working with the images

Step 1: Socio-historical analysis: The Global Project of EFA and Inclusion

We begin our analysis by briefly revisiting the historical context of EFA and its various campaigns and initiatives. The historical construction of the EFA framework has been documented elsewhere (Torres, 1990; Nguyen, 2010). The EFA was set in motion as a result of the World Declaration on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand.[6] Its goal of universalizing basic education in developing countries was advanced by the international campaign on human development at the Dakar Framework of Action.[7] While the Dakar framework was also concerned with other development issues such as early-childhood education, health care and nutrition, basic education continues to play a central role in the global effort to make education a political agenda of development. Since then, the global community has made significant progress in monitoring, fostering, and strengthening the goal of EFA. The discourse of educational inclusion, premised on the rights-based discourse, became an important component in the EFA campaign (Armstrong, Armstrong & Spandagou, 2011).

The central premise of EFA is that within the context of educational development, governments are required to restructure the educational systems to mainstream out-of-school and disadvantaged children into the national school system. As a global strategy on governing modern schooling, EFA structures institutional development through the formal and informal educational programmes in so-called developing countries. Its framework is used as an instrument for social transformation through such educational policies as the inclusion of disadvantaged groups such as girls, ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, and adults in education. As stipulated by the Dakar Framework of Acton, this form of governance is applied at the global, national and local levels.

From a governmentality perspective, EFA represents the art of modern governance through its discourses about rights, development and inclusion. For example, the right to education is a discourse that articulates the rationalities of inclusion for transforming exclusion. This discourse is institutionalized through reform strategies such as providing disadvantaged children with access to, and equality of opportunity in, education. This institutional agenda promotes legislative reform, mainstreaming, and resource redistribution to the local institutions to improve access and quality education. Thus, the emergence of the rights-based discourse in education within the global transition to a modern context signifies a shift from the traditional form of governing that has been applied at the global, national and local levels.

Elsewhere, Nguyen (2010) argues that EFA has constructed new forms of knowledge about education. For instance, the emergence of universalizing primary education (UPE) has created new forms of learning for non-traditional school populations. Informal learning is an example of this. The rights-based discourse includes disadvantaged children in different forms of education through educational management strategies such as professionalizing teachers, investing in education, and standardizing schooling. These management strategies construct

the truth about governing modern institutions. At the same time, educational programmes function as disciplinary techniques to classify school population based on the standardized form of schooling (Nguyen, 2012). These forms of knowledge are also ways of observing, categorizing, hierarchizing, and governing school populations through normative practices that restructure the politics of education.

Further, governmentality studies enable us to understand the "problematic of government" (Rose, 2008) in modern liberal states. In modern governance, the control of the state is associated with the control of population. Rather than freeing the individual from state power, modern governance produces institutional power by governing the population and at the same time exercising forces on the individual body. This is a distinct form of bio-politics. Discourses such as rights and development function as forms of knowledge that constitute technologies of power in modern states. The relationship between knowledge and power constructs the subject.[8] As Pettit & Wheeler (2005) note, the formulation of rights, alongside development discourse, is a part of the global institution in addressing the problems of injustice. The rights and development discourses are typically in tension with each other in their fundamental rationalities. The rights discourse is premised on basic human values for inclusion, participation and self-determination, whereas development discourse articulates the truth of modern governance through the rationalities of poverty reduction and improvement of services for human and social development (see Nyamu-Musembi & Cornwall, 2004). Governing the social through development strategies, then, requires the articulation of a human rights regime that exercises power through global, national and local development programmes such as EFA and UPE. Within this neo-liberal agenda of public institutions, schooling is used as an uncontested approach for mainstreaming girls, minority, and disabled children – those who come under the categories of "underserved" individuals in the United Nation's Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] Jomtien declaration. The selection, representation, and publication of the visual images in the global EFA Global Monitoring Reports, thus, are technologies of government that shape new ways of thinking about modern individuals. Our analysis of the visual representations of children in so-called developing countries demonstrates how the idea of modern individuals has emerged through the modern norm of schooling.

Step 2: Reading the images
"Where am I in the world? Shaping a new version of childhood through the rights-based agenda"

Our first image (see Image 1) focuses on the child or learner subject. We selected this image because it raises a number of critical issues around the contested rights and development agenda. Posted in the mid-term report of 2008, this image characterizes the agenda of gender mainstreaming through the social relationship between girlhood and schooling. The globe itself is a marker of education, a school artefact along with such objects as chalkboards and desks. The girl is depicted learning about other regions of the world. Learning is represented in this image through observing and discovering empirical evidence. The relationship between rights, schooling and the image of girlhood constructs the agenda of inclusion. The girl's gendered identity is not presented as a "docile body" (Foucault, 1975:137), but as an active agent in the process of learning social sciences. We see the girl in action: her finger marking a place on the map, her eyes focused on the globe. The image is also notable because it directs the viewers

to the side of the globe with the map of Europe. This signifying practice is important because it evokes a question about the racial representations of childhood in relation to social mapping of Europe. That is, people are represented as "other" when they embody non-western ways of being and different ways of thinking. However, they are in a process of becoming "us" by subscribing to Eurocentric ways of learning.

Image 1 Global monitoring report 2008 – Midterm review (UNESCO, 2007:10)

The gaze is a critical element in visual studies because it links gender, inclusion, and education. As is typical in these reports, the subject's name is unstated. However, her identity is known to the viewer through the textual descriptions. Viewers are able to identify in the image, for instance, who the girl is, where she comes from, and what she is learning. Her race, clothes, location, and her approach to the empirical method of learning reflect the relationship between policy reform and childhood development. This image evokes a modern sense of childhood: the child is participating in public institutional schooling, classified according to the visual depiction of her race and sex. The association between childhood, schooling, and the social map within the political agenda of the EFA, are the unstated discourses implicated in this educational framework.

Please sir…: The perpetuation of "the Otherness"
Next, we examine an image from the Global Monitoring Report 2010, *Reaching the margina-*

lized, which focuses on poverty and food insecurity. It is important to look at the contested discourses shaped by the representation of childhood. Who is being pictured? Why? How? What are the cultural politics of representation and what does this work show about the ideological implications of equal rights discourse in policy texts? Image 2, published in the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010, re-articulates the struggle for rights.

Image 2 Children queue for food in Pakistan, Global monitoring report 2010
(UNESCO, 2010:18)

This photo is meant to depict the impact of the food crisis on children in the context of the Millennium Development Goals. It reflects what Darian-Smith (2010) refers to as the historical dimensions of the relationship between race and rights. In this image, Pakistani children and adults queue for food. The image depicts the anxious face of the boy, accompanied by the image of a big empty container, and a long line of other children waiting for food. The big container right above the boy's head occupies a central place in the photograph. The caption running in the middle of this photo reads, "Children queue for food in Pakistan: rising prices hit the poor hardest." These children, viewed through the discourse of poverty and crisis, become an object of care and policy intervention.

We read the image in terms of both its association with governmentality, and its implication in shaping a vision of childhood. Just as with the first image, in which childhood is pictured as the object of the global campaign, this image positions the child as socially deprived and incapable of overcoming the injustice. This (under)development discourse in which this image is presented serves to divide different worlds (Hall, 1996). This image calls on states to take action in transforming the reality of social exclusion for disadvantaged children. Its implication is that the current status of poverty and exclusion stands in contrast to the United

Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child[9] which states that they should be protected and enjoy equal participation, and calls on the UNCRC to act to protect children's rights as promised.

However, the images of poor children seem to depict them as victims of underdevelopment, and thus construct children as the polar other to the developed world. This image recalls the "Please, sir…" of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, a social representation of the other in Victorian England. In fact, as Wehbi, Elin & El-Lahib (2010) argue, despite the international promotion of the rights-based agenda, the affected groups being supported by international development discourse tend to be absent or represented with disabling language and discourses. In this image, the child's agency and subjectivity is replaced by the vision of disadvantage that objectifies the underdevelopment of his society. Through this discourse, viewers in developed countries are provided with images of exploited children suffering from the state abuse of their basic human rights. While this discourse may call on global interventions to reduce poverty, we believe that the stigmatization of children living in poverty continues to perpetuate injustice for the children because these images construct the audience's knowledge about the rest of the world. They construct the way viewers in economically developed countries understand individuals in developing countries: the suffering image of children calls for global action to protect and to intervene. At the same time, this politics of representation reinforces the stereotyped view that people in developing countries lack agency, are victimized, and live in suffering.

Disability and inclusion: A space of justice?

Image 3 is from the same report as above (Global Monitoring Report 2010). It depicts a girl with a disability in what seems to be an inclusive classroom. In the image, viewers are encouraged to imagine an enabling environment in which disadvantaged children are included. The social context of the image evokes a sense of belonging, a sharp contrast to the suffering, wariness and exclusion in the previous photo. Thus, being cared for and being alone, being in the classroom and being out of school, are the polar representations of childhood that reflect the "dividing practice" (Foucault, 1975) between inclusion and exclusion. That is, the image draws a division between the ethics of inclusion and the ills of exclusion. Inclusion is associated with happiness and belonging, and exclusion is associated with maltreatment, malnutrition and an absence of humane treatment. This discursive practice constitutes a moral assumption about good and bad practices of modern governance. In the process, the disabled subject is figured as an object of government.

The social construction of girlhood and disability is shown through the image of the classroom and individuals who participate in this environment. The classroom is depicted as an accessible environment for the wheelchair user; the girl's assistant and classmates help her to conduct the classroom activities with care, consideration and dedication. The child is discursively positioned as being cared for and protected by the institutional arrangement of schooling. The discourses of care and ethics objectify childhood as an object for modern government. New forms of schooling for children disadvantaged by their gender and disability, thus, are institutionalized through the discourse of inclusion.

Notably, this image does not portray obvious signs of powerlessness, or marginalization. The girl is presented as having agency and participating fully. Further, viewing this image in relation to the international development discourse and in relation to the previous image of

childhood, we believe that this is a more enabling and inclusive vision of the rights-based agenda. However, from a governmentality perspective, the ethics of care, the practices of community intervention, and the rights to education are the discursive practices which construct a more inclusive vision of education. Childhood is constructed in relation to future citizenship, endowed with the rights to development, care, and protection by supportive adults. This image of childhood, therefore, represents a normalizing practice that has emerged in modern societies. As Rose (1999) observes, child welfare was a subject of social intervention in the Western public policies in the nineteenth century. The policies that claimed to promote welfare, citizenship and management of social behaviour were actually instruments of social control in modern institutions. Youth delinquency, pauperism and social crimes were constructed as the threats to society which rendered childhood subject to social regulation. Rose (1999) argues that in modern societies, a network of intervention programmes is institutionalized to govern children's conduct by granting them the right and responsibility to self-govern. By endowing young citizens with rights and responsibilities, institutions maintain social control over their lives. Policies and laws, rather than being in the interest of children, are instruments of institutional power that governs the lives of modern individuals (Rose, 1999).

Image 3 Inclusive education and childhood
development, Global monitoring report 2010
(UNESCO, 2010:12)

Following Rose (1999), our analysis of these images suggests that modern institutions construct new power relations and shape a vision of childhood through modern forms of schooling. This governmentality does not aim to exclude children, but normalizes them through the application of institutional forces such as the discourse of rights and responsibilities. This mode of governing has the effect of reshaping our ways of knowing and acting through normative assumptions about "good" and "bad" environments for children, "good" and "bad" behaviour and "good" and "bad" societies. The behaviour of individual children is governed by regulation and disciplining based on these institutional assumptions.

Step 3: Theorizing EFA, Inclusion and Governmentality
In this third phase we step back and theorize about the images we have examined. In this case we have used theories of governmentality in relation to postcolonial theory to understand the politics of EFA and the representation of childhood in the EFA Global Monitoring Reports. The images we have discussed might be read as discursive practices which shape a vision of inclusion, exclusion, and social change through the representation of childhood. We observe the effect of EFA discourses through the lenses of governmentality and childhood development. Children in these images were represented in relation to their backgrounds, social status, nationalities and ethnicities. We see the images as representing and institutionalizing the discourse of rights and development which ultimately brings us back to the politics of EFA in relation to the process of transforming so-called developing societies to modernity. Modernity, as Hall (1996) observes, is a social process in which institutions construct their values, discourses, ideologies and cultural expressions in ways that transform the former organizations of traditional societies. Through this lens of critical theory, we reflect on how modernity constructs our vision of the world through the discourses that relate to the representation of childhood.

Hall (1996) refers to discourses as ways of representing the other within postcolonial conditions. Discourses are ways of talking and thinking, and of representing ideas that influence practices and shape knowledge. Discourses construct meanings about difference. The legacy of colonialism, Hall (1996:208) argues, is "to bring home how these very different discourses, with variable statuses as 'evidence', provided the cultural framework through which the peoples, places, and things of the New World were seen, described, and represented."

In our case study, we have examined the ways EFA has shaped our vision of childhood through the discourses that construct the child within the regime of rights and development. The images they select show how these discourses construct knowledge and power in the global context of educational reform. As Nguyen (2012) demonstrates, several programmes such as community-based interventions, special education and vocational training are shaped in within the international development agenda. This network of bio-power operates within local practices to govern and discipline individual conduct. Within this modern context, the restructuring of the rights discourse is an integral part of modern governance which implies the reconstruction of social relations. This form of governance is shaped through the language of rights, namely, the rights of individuals to participate in an institutional order (Darian-Smith, 2010). Including girls in education, for example, is an important theme marking the rights-based agenda of the EFA. This rights-based agenda is an expression of social justice that is conveyed through the political agenda of educational reform.

A critical perspective on governmentality and inclusion is important, however, in helping us to understand the relationship between discourses and power relations in shaping individual subjectivity. Following Foucault's genealogy of the emergence of the modern individual (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983), we note how visual images construct our knowledge about difference. Visual politics is a discursive practice that plays an instrumental role in shaping our understanding of childhood within the institutional condition of modern development. Visual analysis helps us to examine how childhood is governed through a regime of practices that shape the modern subject.

Conclusion

What's in a picture? Our analysis of the three images demonstrates, we believe, how textual readings of visual images can be used as a type of "picturing policy" in ways that suggest that the images can themselves provide critical entry points to meaning-making. Clearly, our readings of the photos here reflect our own position as users of the policy documents in this case, rather than as producers or as readers from the outside.[10] It is important to consider that our readings should not be taken as a criticism of the agencies that produce the documents so much as a tool for reflection. It helps us to deconstruct, we think, the ways in which meanings are used to shape a particular vision of the world (Ball, 1990). As we have chosen to work with only a small sampling of the images available, we might also think about what we have left out and how our own standpoints have affected the selection of images. Indeed, this approach can be instrumental for critical policy analysis, because it enables us to raise concerns about the political dimensions of knowledge and power shaped through policy. At the same time, we see that this type of work could provide an important tool for policymaking institutions to reflect on the complexity of policy intention, process and effects of policy, as well as its implications on social justice in the global context. Well-intentioned policy may inadvertently reinforce cultural divides and stereotypes in the international context in which policies are borrowed and adapted (Lindblad & Popkewitz, 2004). We believe that a critical and self-reflexive approach is an important tool for research in policy and social change which will help address the crucial, yet unarticulated, aspects of culture invested in policy texts and discourses. Although images may be meant simply as illustrations, they carry their own meanings and ideological implications. The meanings constructed by visual representation reflect institutional discourses and practices and imply specific postcolonial power relations.

Our case study used governmentality studies and postcolonial studies in relation to visual methodologies to analyse the global framework of EFA, and the extent to which this framework has shaped our understanding of the poor, ethnic minorities, gender, and disability. Understanding the discourses and power relations in EFA is critical for helping us to theorize its implications for constructing social difference, which allows a critical engagement with policy and power in modern societies. While our case study focuses on the global framework of EFA, the approach could be applied to many other global and local documents. We consider, for example, the range of policy documents in the South African context that offer various representations of childhood, and how a comparison of the images of children in the annual reports of the Children's Institute or in the reports of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund could point to differing views of children's agency, for example, as an important entry point to reflecting on policymaking in relation to such areas as access to schooling, provision of services to orphans and vulnerable children and addressing issues of safety and security. This work has

relevance to many other policy-related documents that include visual texts and are linked to such areas as poverty alleviation, food security or HIV and AIDS. Visual analysis enables us to interrogate who is in the image, who is not, what discourses, ideologies, and messages these images imply, and what they may tell us about the politics of inclusion and exclusion in the policy agenda of the various organizations producing the documents. Instead of taking images for granted, then, it is important to ask what is implied in the social meanings of textual elements. Finally, we also note the significance of this kind of analysis to our own engagement as "producers" within policy dialogue. Thus, while we have focused here on "other producers'" documents, we want to acknowledge the relevance of this type of analysis to ensuring a reflexive gaze on our own endeavours in knowledge production. Working with the visual, we believe, offers a strategic space within which to carry out educational policy research.

Notes

1   Within the scope of this article it is not possible to detail fully Foucault's notion of governmentality (Foucault, 1991). What is most crucial to the arguments of this paper is to recognize that governmentality is focused on studying the problematics of modern governance. For instance, Dean (1999) examines the rules and power in modern societies through his sociological analysis of the various forms of liberalism in western societies. While the liberal doctrine highlights the sovereignty of free and self-autonomous individuals, modern governance functions through a regime of discourses and practices that govern the individual's conduct through the bio-politics of modern power. This problematic of government in liberalism was then replaced with the emergence of neo-liberalism, which Dean (1999) refers to as "advanced liberalism", and the individualizing techniques being applied in neo-liberalism. Similarly, Larner (2000) draws on governmentality studies to examine the dimensions to which neo-liberalism constructs the subjectivity of individuals through various discursive and material practices such as the Code of Social and Family Responsibility that emphasized family as a self-sufficient site of social wellbeing. These institutional processes go beyond the ideological forces driving the neoliberal doctrine. In this paper, we use governmentality studies and postcolonial theory to demonstrate the discursive formation of image and discourse, in relation to the institutional forces underlying this politics of governance. For other research applying governmentality studies, see Ball (1994), Rose (1999, 2008) and Tremain (2005).

2   Available at http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/20034-gender/

3   Available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001548/154820e.pdf

4   Available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001866/186606E.pdf

5   Following the convention of working with images and other texts that are in the public domain, we did not seek permission to analyse these images for the purposes of this article. What we have tried to do is make clear that this is an interpretive process drawing on a particular framework. Because the images are in the public domain, readers can themselves also go to the primary source material to study the particular images.

6   Available at http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/JOMTIE_E.PDF

7   Available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf

8   The notion of the subject, according to Foucault, has two meanings: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by means of self-knowledge (Foucault, 1982). Both meanings suggest a form of power that constitutes the individual through forms of subjection.

9   Available at http://www.cirp.org/library/ethics/UN-convention/

10   For an "insider/outsider" reading of EFA in Vietnam, see Nguyen (2012).

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