



NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC  
LEARNING



15th  
ANGLO  
CONGRESS

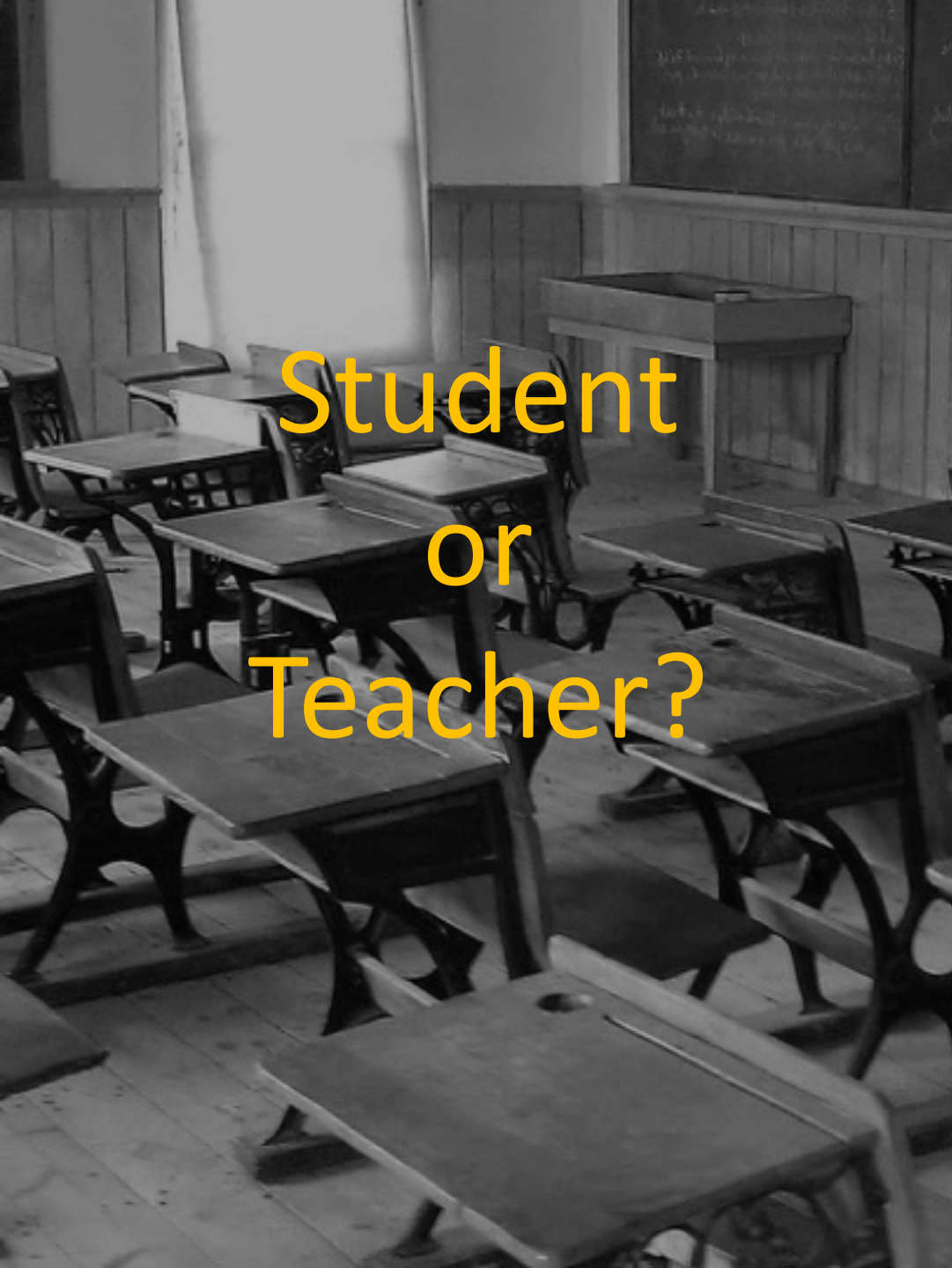
# Turning the coin on empowerment

Paula Rebolledo Cortés



Teacher  
empowerment

Student  
empowerment



# Student or Teacher?

In your classroom who determines;

- a) the goals?
- b) the content?
- c) the materials?
- d) the activities?
- e) the pace?
- f) the assessment system?
- g) the learning approach?



1

What?

2

What for?

3

How?

4

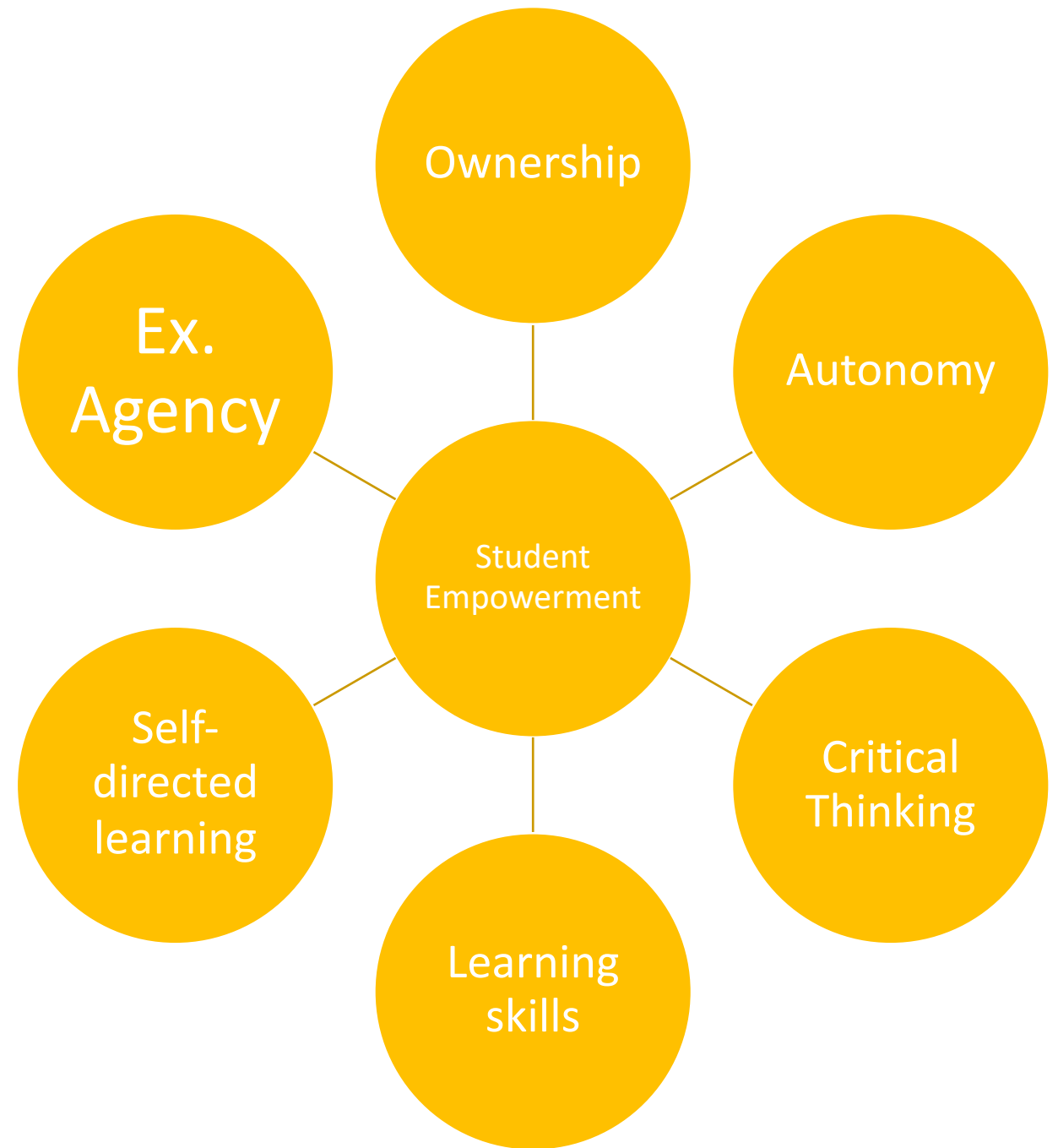
Now what?

1

What?



What concepts/ideas can be associated to student empowerment?





**Empowerment**  
has been defined as

“Student’s feeling of competence to perform a task that is meaningful and has an impact on the situation”

Frymier, Shulman, and Houser (1996)

## Meaningfulness



Value of classroom content and tasks for them.

## Competence

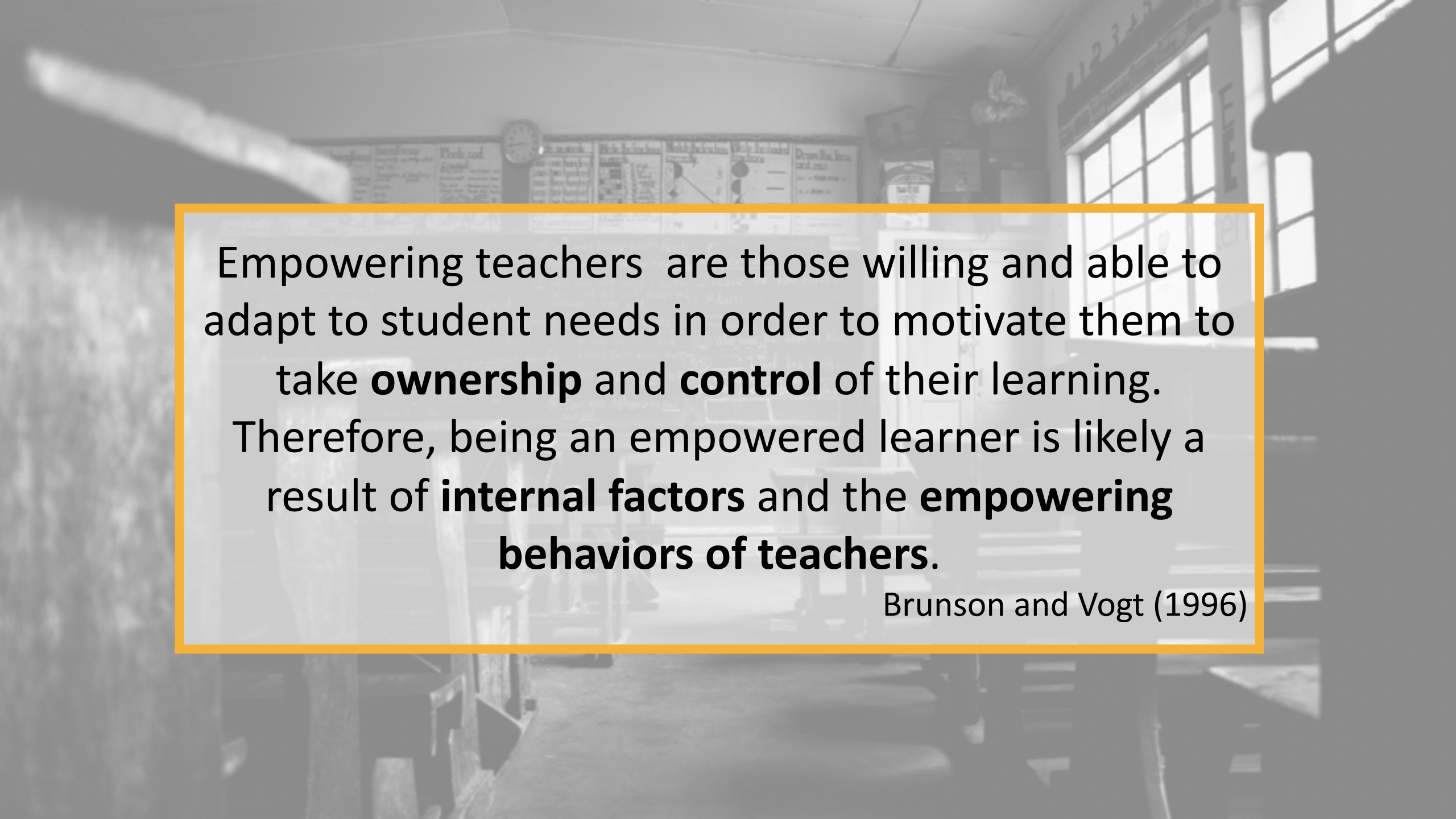


Feeling able and capable to achieve learning goals.

## Impact



Influence in their classroom, with their teacher and classmates.



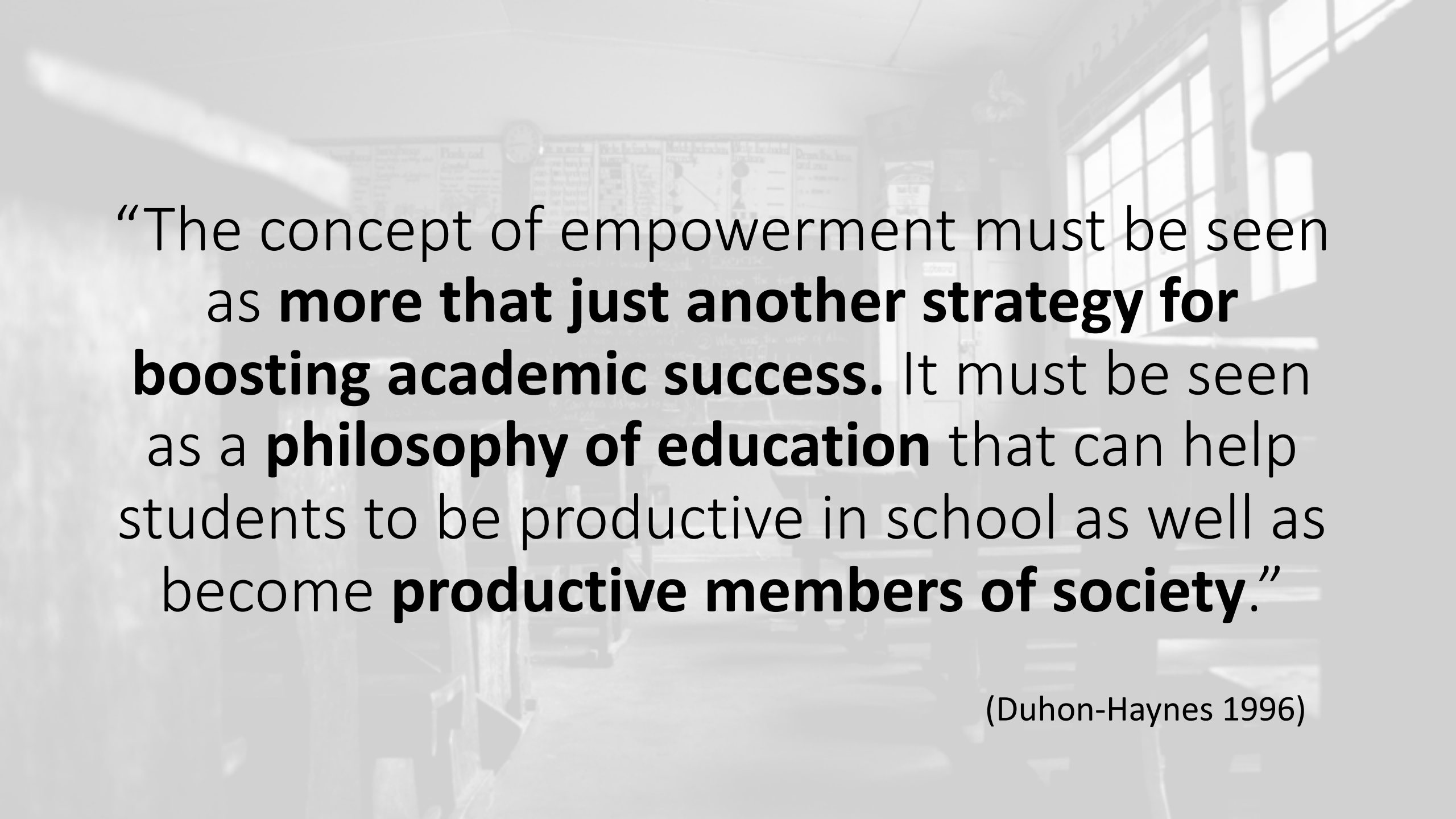
Empowering teachers are those willing and able to adapt to student needs in order to motivate them to take **ownership** and **control** of their learning. Therefore, being an empowered learner is likely a result of **internal factors** and the **empowering behaviors of teachers**.

Brunson and Vogt (1996)

# Empowering learners implies..

- Views of learning as **inquiry, discovery.**
- Views of knowledge as being **personally acquired** not given.
- Views of classrooms as **communities.**
- Views of learners as **capable individuals.**

(Duhon-Haynes 1996)



“The concept of empowerment must be seen as **more than just another strategy for boosting academic success.** It must be seen as a **philosophy of education** that can help students to be productive in school as well as become **productive members of society.**”

(Duhon-Haynes 1996)



“The concept of empowerment must be seen as **more than just another strategy for boosting academic success.** It must be seen as a philosophy of education that can help students to be productive in school as well as become **productive members of society.**”

(Duhon-Haynes 1996)

2

What for?





- An empowered learner is motivated to learn.
- An empowered learner feels able and competent.
- An empowered learner thinks learning tasks are meaningful.
- An empowered learner thinks learning tasks have an impact in their learning.
- An empowered learner cares about their learning.

# Empowerment or fun?



Need for **challenge**, instead?

Pushing learners to “operate  
at the outer limits of their current abilities”

(Long 1989:13)

Input slightly ahead of learners’ current  
ability

(Krashen 1985)

Need for **challenge**, instead?

~~$i + \text{"fun"}$~~

$i + 1$

Need for **personalisation**, instead?

**Personalising** the syllabus and making it relevant, has a positive effect in students' learning.

(Dörnyei 1994, Dörnyei & Csizér 1998)

# Empowerment

The image shows a classroom with rows of wooden desks and chairs. In the background, there is a chalkboard with some faint writing. The word "Empowerment" is written in large, bold, orange letters across the top center of the image. The overall scene is dimly lit and has a slightly faded appearance.



Tapping into students' interests

“What do you want to learn?”

Students' assessing their own learning

Students' ownership

Students asking own questions

# PARADIGM SHIFT!

Teachers asking all questions

Students' involvement

Taking assessments

“You must learn this”

Making the topic interesting

(Spencer, 2019)

3

How?



# Choice & Voice

context, topic or  
issue

learning  
method/learning  
strategy

where they are  
in their learning

materials and  
resources

assessment (peer  
and self)

product format

# How empowering is your classroom?

Never

Sometimes

Always



1. You give your students options of activities to do in class.
2. You provide opportunities for students to self-assess.
3. Your students choose some of the content to cover in class.
4. Your students know where they are at in their learning.
5. Your students feel safe making mistakes.
6. You consult with your students the topics to discuss in class.

# Ways to empower

- Create opportunities for collaboration
- Give students the ability to choose
- Encourage students input
- Provide detailed ongoing action-based feedback



# Champion Teachers Programme



Rebolledo & Bullock (2018)



Rebolledo & Bullock (2018)

# Student empowerment

# Listening to students' voices

Students informed teachers;

- About their needs
- About their likes
- About their interests
- About their teachers





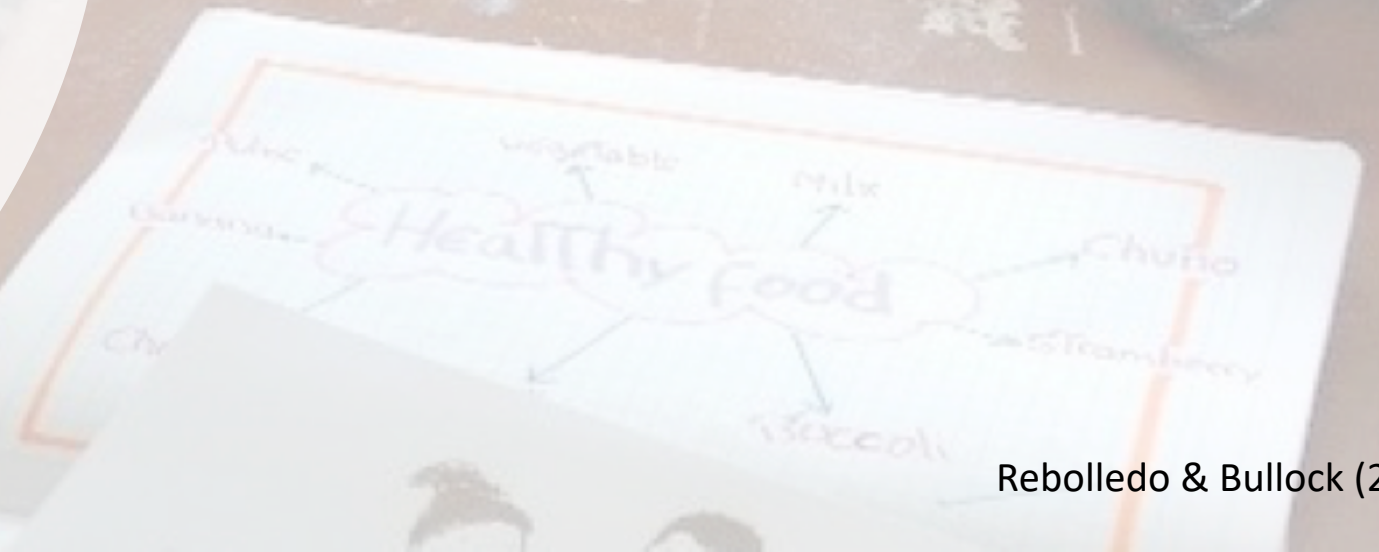
Rebolledo & Bullock (2018)

## About their needs

- More vocabulary support before speaking activities.
- Strategy training for writing and reading.

# About their likes

- Groupwork and pairwork over individual work.
- Interactive and dynamic activities.



# About their interests

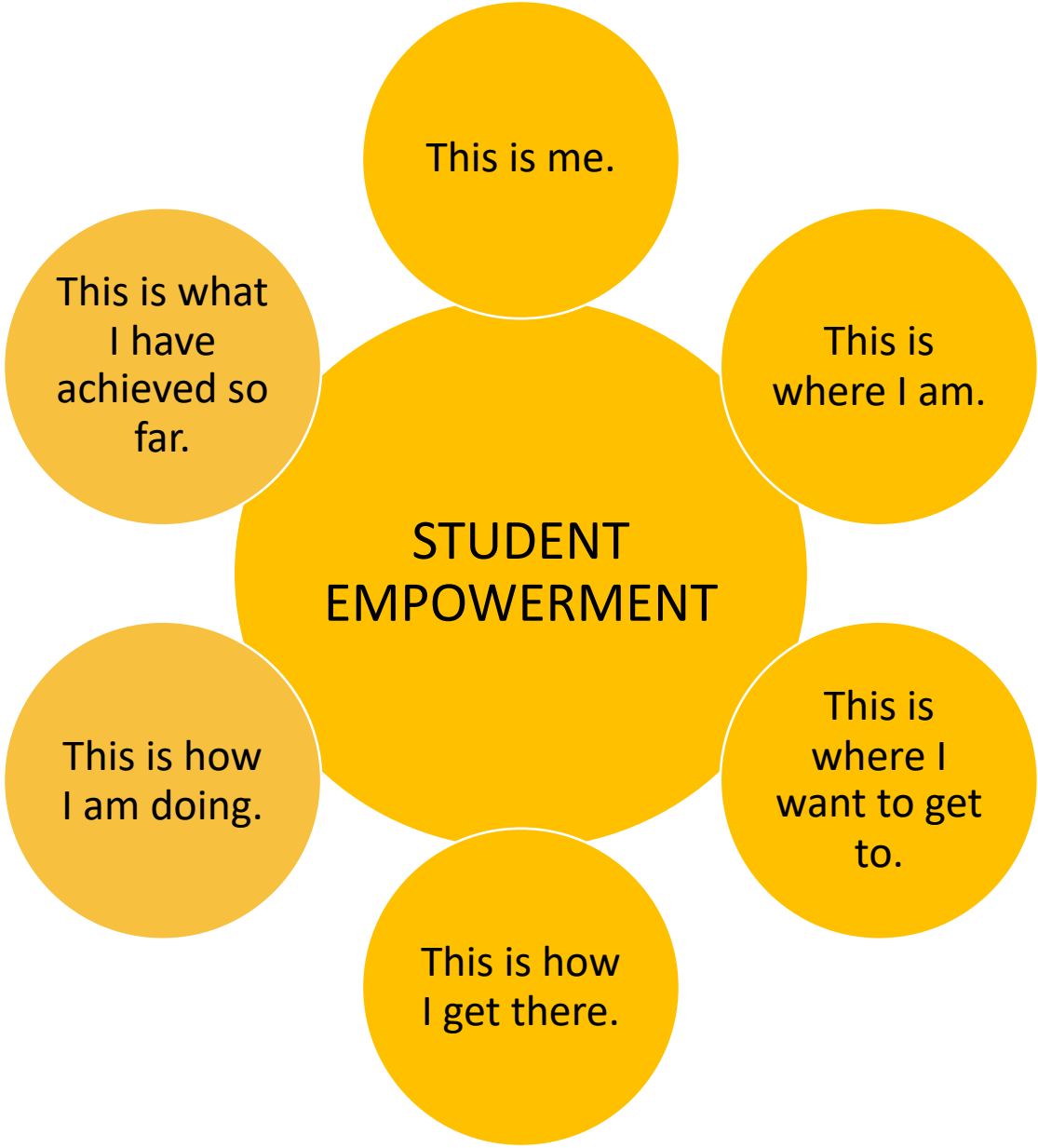
- Reading texts to include topics such as sports and music.
- Practice the English language for communication.

# About their teachers

- Valued their teachers being **learners**.
- Appreciated teachers who **ask and listen**.



# Voice & Choice



# Voice & Choice

Please continue..

Please start ...

Please stop..



# How empowering are these language activities?

1. Students complete a gap-fill activity with Wh-questions in pairs.

2. Students write sentences using a grammatical structure explained by the teacher.

3. Students practice giving directions by asking a classmate using a map.

4. Students answer questions about story they selected.

5. Students design a checklist to assess their own writing.



# Empowerment

Students practice Wh-questions by interviewing each other.

Students discover a grammar rule by looking at examples of sentences where the structure is being used.

Students practice directions by bringing maps of their own hometown.

Students create their own questions about a story they selected.

# Getting started.. **slowly!**

1

Get to know  
your  
students

2

Introduce  
collaborative  
work

3

Give options  
on topics or  
activities

4

Promote  
self-  
assessment

5

Encourage  
students'  
questions

4

Now what?





One idea or activity you will **pass on**.

One idea or activity you will **adapt**.

One idea or activity you will **try**.



The choice..

is yours!

(Rebollo, Just now!)



NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC  
LEARNING



15<sup>th</sup>  
ANGLO  
CONGRESS

# Turning the coin on empowerment

Paula Rebolledo Cortés

## References

Brunson, D. A., & Vogt, J. F. (1996). Empowering our students and ourselves: A liberal democratic approach to the communication classroom. *Communication Education*, 45, 7383.

Dörnyei, Z. (1994). Motivation and Motivating in the Foreign Language Classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(3), 273–284.

Dörnyei, Z., & Csizér, K. (1998). Ten commandments for motivating language learners: Results of an empirical study. *Language Teaching Research*.

Duhon-Haynes, G. (1996). Student Empowerment : Definition, Implications and Strategies for Implementation. In *Paper presented at the Third World Symposium*.

Frymier, A. B., Shulman, G. M., & Houser, M. (1996). The development of a learner empowerment measure. *Communication Education*, 45(3), 181–199.

Krashen, S. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications*. Harlow: Longman.

Long, M. H. (1989). Task, group, and task-group interactions. *University of Hawaii working papers in ESL*, 8 (2), 1-26.

Rebolledo, P., & Bullock, D. (Eds.). (2018). *Champion Teachers Peru: Stories of Exploratory Action Research*. London: British Council.

Spencer, J. (2019). [Blog post] Retrieved from: *Making The Shift from Student Engagement to Student Empowerment*  
<http://www.spencerauthor.com/empowerment-shifts/>