

Coaching conversations and the use of classroom translanguaging.

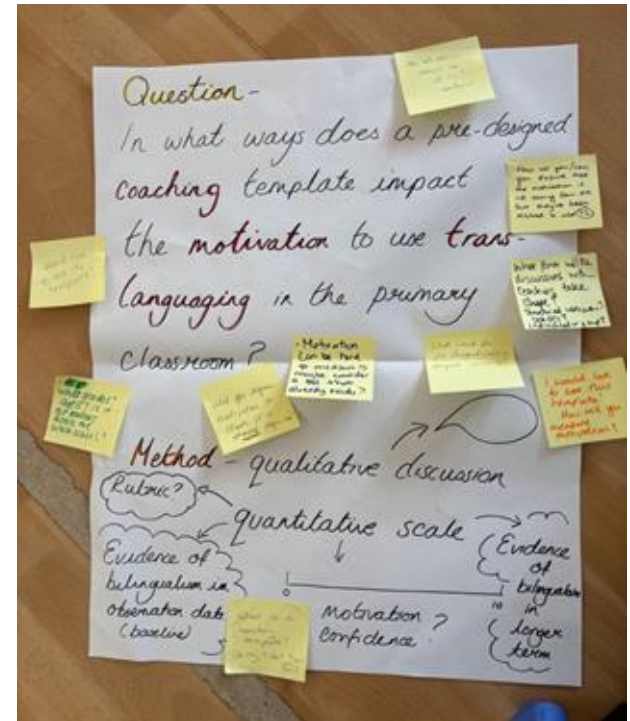
School Name: Claremont, Ecole Mosaic and LES (Lady Elizabeth).

Team Members: Barbara Stoecker, Helen Fleet, Alex Collinson and Ted Winslow



Research Question

How can a coaching protocol be used to influence teachers' and learning assistants' attitudes towards pedagogical translinguaging practices in multilingual classrooms?



Literature Review - the common thread in all articles

Across the studies, a clear common thread is the need to shift away from monolingual, deficit-based perspectives towards seeing learners' full linguistic repertoires as valuable resources for learning. Together, the research highlights that **multilingual learners** are often **underestimated** due to persistent **misconceptions**, such as the belief that using multiple languages causes confusion or indicates lower ability. However, when **teachers** are supported through **training, coaching**, or **structured frameworks**, they become more **open to integrating students' home languages and adopting translanguaging practices** that enhance access to academic content. The studies also consistently emphasise that **effective implementation requires more than goodwill**: it depends on deliberate planning, teacher belief change, and sustained professional support that builds confidence and pedagogical flexibility.



Literature Review



Article titles	Key take-away idea
The case of a pedagogical translinguaging intervention in a trilingual primary school: the students' voice Oihana Leonet and Eider Saragueta. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTILINGUALISM 2024, VOL. 21, NO. 4, 2112–2130	The study concludes that reducing language boundaries creates a more efficient and natural learning environment . It shows that pupils often need explicit teaching as they may not notice these links independently. It also suggests that planned translinguaging can be well received by learners and support communicative competence .
A Conceptual Framework Supporting Translinguaging Pedagogies in Secondary Dual-Language Programs Jaclyn Caires Hurley 1,* , Jessica Dougherty 1,* and Susana Ibarra Johnson	The 2024 framework argues that effective translinguaging requires teachers to view pupils' full linguistic repertoires as a resource, rather than treating languages as separate . It combines this view with deliberate planning and flexible classroom responses, using strategies such as inquiry cycles, multimodal literacies and translinguaging objectives. Its aim is to soften language boundaries, support identity development and give pupils more equitable access to challenging academic content.

Literature Review



Article titles	Key take-away idea
Beyond the English Learner Label: Recognizing the Richness of Bi/Multilingual Students' Linguistic Repertoires Ramón Antonio Martínez The Reading Teacher Vol. 71 No. 5 March/April 2018	A persistent deficit discourse shapes how bi/multilingual students are perceived, reinforced by ideas such as the “word gap” narrative that frames English learners as linguistically lacking. In education, we often normalize monolingualism and view English learners as a monolithic, struggling, or at-risk group, which limits recognition of their full abilities. As a result, we frequently fail to see them as capable readers and writers. Rethinking English learners requires shifting this perspective: code-switching should be understood not as deficiency but as a normal and skilled expression of bilingual competence.
Teachers' beliefs about the role of prior language knowledge in learning and how these influence teaching practices Gessica De Angelis (2011), International Journal of Multilingualism, 8:3, 216-234	Teachers in Italy, Austria, and Great Britain often share similar misconceptions about multilingual learners, particularly the belief that prior language knowledge causes confusion and slows learning. This reflects a need for training that values home languages as cognitive and social assets. Teachers should also be supported in maintaining students' heritage languages and understanding their importance for identity, family relationships, and future opportunities. Additionally, many teachers exclude students' home languages from classroom practice, limiting effective multilingual education. Overall, the findings show that more targeted teacher training is needed to build inclusive multilingual classroom cultures and challenge monolingual biases.

Literature Review



Article titles	Key take-away idea
Cognitive coaching: a powerful supervisory tool to increase teacher sense of efficacy and shape teacher identity Süleyman Davut Göke TEACHER DEVELOPMENT 2020, VOL. 24, NO. 4, 559–582	Cognitive coaching is useful because it supports the adoption of new practices by addressing the beliefs that shape educator behaviour, including efficacy, flexibility and interdependence. Rather than simply offering new strategies, it builds confidence to try, sustain and adapt them. Through reflective coaching cycles, the hope is to move from a survival mindset towards greater autonomy and confidence in implementing complex practices such as translanguaging.
Teachers' beliefs about multilingual pedagogies and the role of initial training Laura Portolés & Otilia Martí (2020) Teachers' beliefs about multilingual pedagogies and the role of initial training, International Journal of Multilingualism, 17:2, 248-264	Teacher training positively influenced pre-service teachers' attitudes toward multilingualism and translanguaging, encouraging support for integrated language teaching and use of students' full linguistic repertoires. However, beliefs about age remained resistant, with many still believing younger children learn languages better. Overall, coaching can reduce monolingual biases and support inclusive practices.

Literature Review



Article titles	Key take-away idea
Instructional Coaching: A Partnership Approach to Improving Instruction Jim Knight Corwin Press (2007)	Knight argues that instructional coaching is most effective when it is collaborative, reflective and non evaluative. Rather than positioning teachers as passive recipients of professional development, coaching should involve partnership- based dialogue that encourages reflection, trust and professional autonomy. Knight suggests that teachers are more likely to adapt and develop their classroom practices when coaching is built on supportive and reflective conversations rather than judgement or top down instruction. This highlights the potential of coaching as a professional learning tool capable of influencing teacher beliefs and classroom practices over time.
Cognitive Coaching as a Form of Professional Development in a Linguistically Diverse School Alla Gonzalez Del Castillo University of Missouri–St. Louis, 2015	Cognitive coaching can support teachers in becoming more reflective and self directed practitioners within linguistically diverse classrooms. Del Castillo argues that sustained coaching conversations encourage teachers to reflect more deeply on their instructional practices and become more open to adapting their teaching approaches. The study suggests that coaching may gradually influence teacher beliefs, attitudes and responsiveness towards multilingual learners through ongoing dialogue, trust and reflective practice rather than one off professional development sessions.

Literature Review

Article titles	Key take-away idea
Teachers' Beliefs about Multilingualism in a Course on Translanguaging Durk Gorter & Eukene Arocena <i>System</i> Vol. 92 (2020)	Gorter and Arocena explore how a translanguaging focused professional development course influenced teachers' beliefs about multilingualism. The study found that teachers became more aware of the value of students' home languages and began to challenge monolingual assumptions about teaching and learning. Through reflection and professional dialogue, participants developed more positive and inclusive perspectives towards multilingual learners and translanguaging practices. The study suggests that professional learning can play an important role in shifting teacher attitudes towards more multilingual pedagogies.
Exploring Ideological Becoming in Professional Development for Teachers of Multilingual Learners Jennifer Holdway & Christopher H. Hitchcock <i>Teaching and Teacher Education</i> Vol. 75 (2018)	Holdway and Hitchcock examine how professional development can influence teachers' ideological perspectives towards multilingual learners. The study suggests that through reflection, discussion and collaborative learning experiences, teachers began to reconsider deficit views of multilingual students and develop more asset based perspectives. The authors argue that teacher beliefs are socially constructed and can gradually shift through sustained professional dialogue and reflective practice.

Literature Review



Article titles	Key take-away idea
Professional Development and Teacher Change Thomas R. Guskey <i>Teachers and Teaching</i> Vol. 8 No. 3 (2002)	Guskey argues that changes in teacher beliefs and attitudes often occur after changes in classroom practice rather than before them. Teachers are more likely to adopt new pedagogical approaches when they observe positive outcomes in student engagement and learning. The study suggests that professional development should provide opportunities for teachers to implement, reflect upon and evaluate new practices within authentic classroom contexts. Guskey therefore highlights the importance of experience and reflection in influencing teacher attitudes and professional change.

Methodology



Primary Data		Secondary Data
Participants	Action Research Leaders	Literature Review
Questionnaire/survey	Survey answers' analysis	Articles available on MLRC Library
CPD session about transanguaging	Professional Development session	
Pre-observation conversations	Coaching log	
Lesson observations	Regular updates/calls	
Post-observation conversations		
Survey		

Methodology — Data Analysis



Quantitative	Qualitative
Descriptive Statistics & Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Tests	Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)
Applied to 5 comparable pre/post Likert-scale pairs across all three sites. What we measured: • Pre/post attitude shifts across 5 Likert-scale constructs • Statistical significance of changes ($p < 0.05$) • Direction and magnitude of shifts Data sources: Pre/post surveys (Spain, Switzerland, UK)	Themes generated from practitioner perspectives, grounded in the tripartite attitude model (cognitive, affective, behavioural). What we analysed: • Open-ended survey responses • Post-observation coaching forms • Researcher journals and learning visit notes Data sources: Coaching logs, researcher journals, open survey responses (all three sites)

Quantitative Findings

Key Descriptive Findings	Cross-Site Patterns and Significance
● Teaching Confidence / Legitimacy (P5) ● Global gain: +1.48; UK largest individual gain: +2.4 ● Frequency and Readiness to Use (P3) ● Second largest global gain: +1.06; all sites improved ● Familiarity and Confidence (P1) ● Global gain: +0.81; Switzerland showed strongest improvement (+1.62) ● Comfort with Integration (P4) ● Modest gain globally (+0.37); all sites moved in positive direction ● Translanguaging Enhances Learning (P2) ● Minimal global change (+0.13); ceiling effect — scores were already near the scale maximum pre-intervention (pre mean 4.12/5)	● Switzerland and UK showed consistent positive change across all five constructs ● Spain showed a notable post-intervention decline on P2 — Translanguaging Enhances Learning (Δ-1.9), possibly reflecting more critical awareness following professional development (CPD) ● Wilcoxon signed-rank test (a non-parametric test for paired pre/post data) indicated a positive directional shift on P5 — Teaching Confidence and P3 — Frequency and Readiness to Use ● Highest post-survey scores: Teaching Confidence — P5 (global mean 4.88) and Translanguaging Enhances Learning — P2 (4.25), both approaching the scale ceiling ● Lowest pre-survey baseline constructs — Familiarity and Confidence (P1) and Frequency and Readiness to Use (P3) — recorded the largest absolute gains, suggesting greatest impact in areas of initial unfamiliarity ● Full charts and statistical tables are included in the appendix

Qualitative Findings

Themes 1 and 2

- **Theme 1: Developing Translanguaging Awareness and Conceptual Shift**
- Teachers moved from scepticism or uncertainty to recognition of translanguaging as a legitimate, enriching pedagogy
- Initial cognitive resistance gave way to curiosity and openness, supported by professional development (CPD) and coaching cycles
- **Theme 2: Coaching as a Catalyst for Pedagogical Risk-Taking**
- The coaching relationship created a safe space to experiment and reflect without fear of judgment
- Pre- and post-observation conversations deepened professional dialogue and supported iterative refinement
- Teachers valued the personalised, responsive nature of coaching over generic CPD

Themes 3 and 4

- **Theme 3: Contextual Constraints and Adaptive Strategies**
- Time, curriculum pressure, and linguistic diversity posed challenges across all three sites
- Teachers adapted strategies (e.g. bilingual glossaries, peer talk, first language (L1) scaffolding) to fit their specific contexts
- Spain and Switzerland highlighted stronger institutional and structural constraints than the UK site
- **Theme 4: Affective Dimensions and Teacher Identity**
- Coaching fostered increased confidence, professional agency, and sense of legitimacy as multilingual educators
- Emotional responses (anxiety, pride, relief) were prominent in coaching logs and researcher notes across all sites
- Teachers expressed intent to continue and embed translanguaging strategies in future practice

Reflections - Claremont school - Secondary setting



Coaching as a Professional Learning Tool	Translanguaging as a Teaching Method
● Coaching increased teacher focus on language outcomes. ● Teachers valued reflection and professional dialogue. ● Coaching exposed assumptions about student understanding. ● Reassurance increased confidence to trial strategies. ● Experienced EAL teachers reflected more deeply. ● Some teachers struggled to maintain a language focus. ● Post-observation discussions supported future improvement. ● Coaching encouraged openness to change and experimentation.	● Translanguaging improved access to lesson content. ● Translation and glossaries increased confidence and independence. ● Students responded positively to multilingual resources. ● Planned strategies worked better than spontaneous use alone. ● Vocabulary checks revealed hidden language gaps. ● Chunking, slower speech, and checking understanding supported learners. ● Active encouragement increased participation and engagement. ● Translanguaging supported literacy and comprehension for all learners.

Reflections - Lady Elizabeth - Primary Setting

Coaching as a Professional Learning Tool	Translanguaging as a Teaching Method
● Increased teacher reflection around multilingual learners. ● Coaching encouraged adaptation of planning and classroom practice. ● Collaborative and non-judgemental coaching supported experimentation. ● Coaching increased curiosity around multilingualism and language development. ● Coaching highlighted wider curriculum and planning issues. ● Coaching may need to include more modelling around translanguaging.	● Children used their home languages more confidently socially than academically. ● Translanguaging supported engagement and participation. ● Children did not automatically know how to use translanguaging strategies. ● Home language literacy affected translanguaging use. ● Translanguaging strategies needed careful planning. ● Early embedding of translanguaging may be important. ● Parents and families may need greater involvement. ● Translanguaging raised wider questions around language learning.

Reflections - Ecole Mosaic - Early Years Setting



Coaching as a Professional Learning Tool

- Coaching really opened up the conversation and felt more non-judgemental and genuine than a directive approach.
- The protocol was useful in structuring the conversation and helping it move forward.
- It seemed to put assistants at ease within a hierarchical professional relationship.

Translanguaging as a Teaching Method

- In Early Years, translanguaging often remains spontaneous in both delivery and planning, as children may not yet have the cognitive control needed to translanguage independently.
- A low-preparation, high-impact model helped reduce concerns about overlapping with the teacher's role.
- The relationship between the assistant and teacher, as well as the quality of the activities provided by the teacher, were key contributing factors to success.
- Modelling bilingual thinking proved to be a useful strategy for eliciting engagement.
- In this age group, the focus of translanguaging is less about accessing complex content and more about creating a language-friendly environment.

Discussion

Coaching as a professional learning tool appears to be valued by teachers and teaching assistants due to the increased ownership they have within the conversation. A point to consider and explore further would be participants' own experiences with language learning, as well as their overall literacy in the MLOE (medium of language of education — i.e., the language of instruction). (Barbara Stoecker)

Some learners appeared initially hesitant when encouraged to use their home language within classroom learning, raising questions about learner expectations surrounding language use in school. This appears to reflect wider literature suggesting that monolingual assumptions can remain embedded even within multilingual educational contexts (Gorter & Arocena, 2020; Martínez, 2018).

Coaching conversations appeared to support increased curiosity and openness towards translanguaging practices through reflective professional dialogue, supporting literature which suggests that collaborative and non-judgemental coaching may encourage teachers to reconsider existing pedagogical beliefs (Knight, 2007; Holdway & Hitchcock, 2018).

The project also raised further questions surrounding learners' metalinguistic awareness and confidence in drawing upon their full linguistic repertoires during learning. This may be particularly significant within international schools, where multilingualism is common but learners' home language literacy and ability to use HL academically may vary considerably. The findings suggest that simply permitting home language use may not automatically lead to effective academic translanguaging and that more explicit support may be needed for both teachers and learners.

These findings may be particularly relevant for international schools, where multilingualism is common but pedagogical translanguaging practices are not always systematically embedded within teaching and learning.

Reflections About Research

Completing the pre- and post-observation conversations using the pre-designed script was highly dependent on the interviewee's attitude and level of engagement.

Participating teachers sometimes tended to lose focus on the intended language outcome and shift instead towards their specific subject or lesson outcomes.

The use of models, frameworks and deadlines made the project easier to implement and helped move it forward. Working as part of a team, rather than alone within the school, was also a key support. Presenting the work to staff as a research project helped validate their inclusion and participation.

Learner reactions sometimes shifted the research focus towards student language use and metalinguistic awareness, even though the primary focus of the project was on teacher and learning assistant attitudes.

At times, it was difficult to separate attitudes towards translanguaging from wider beliefs about language learning and multilingualism. This suggests that broader training around multilingual pedagogy may also be beneficial.

Looking Forward

At Mosaic, the next step will be to present the findings to the learning assistants and gather their feedback on the project. The findings will also be shared internally with teachers. Looking ahead, there is potential to continue this work next year as a longer-term project. This could include the use of a reflective journal to record assistants' perceptions over time. The project has already generated further ideas, including the possible inclusion of translanguaging in our language policy and the exploration of translanguaging through areas such as theatre.

At Claremont, there may also be scope to continue the project next year with a wider range of subjects. One possible direction could be to compare the use of translanguaging approaches in Humanities and STEM subjects. For me, as an action research leader, a key area for development is continuing to practise and refine my coaching skills. While the coaching conversations were valuable, I would benefit from further experience in facilitating these discussions effectively. One question raised by the project is whether the pre-observation phase should include co-planning between action research leads and participating teachers. This would be challenging to implement due to time constraints, but it could help address misconceptions around what translanguaging methods look like in practice.

At LES, future research could explore how multilingual learners are explicitly taught to use translanguaging strategies for learning, rather than simply being given permission to use their home language in the classroom. The project also raised wider questions around home language literacy, academic language development across languages, and the extent to which literacy in the home language may affect learners' ability to use translanguaging strategies effectively in academic contexts. There may also be value in further exploring how schools can support parents in developing subject-specific and academic language across languages. In addition, future work could extend coaching to staff who may initially be less open to translanguaging approaches.

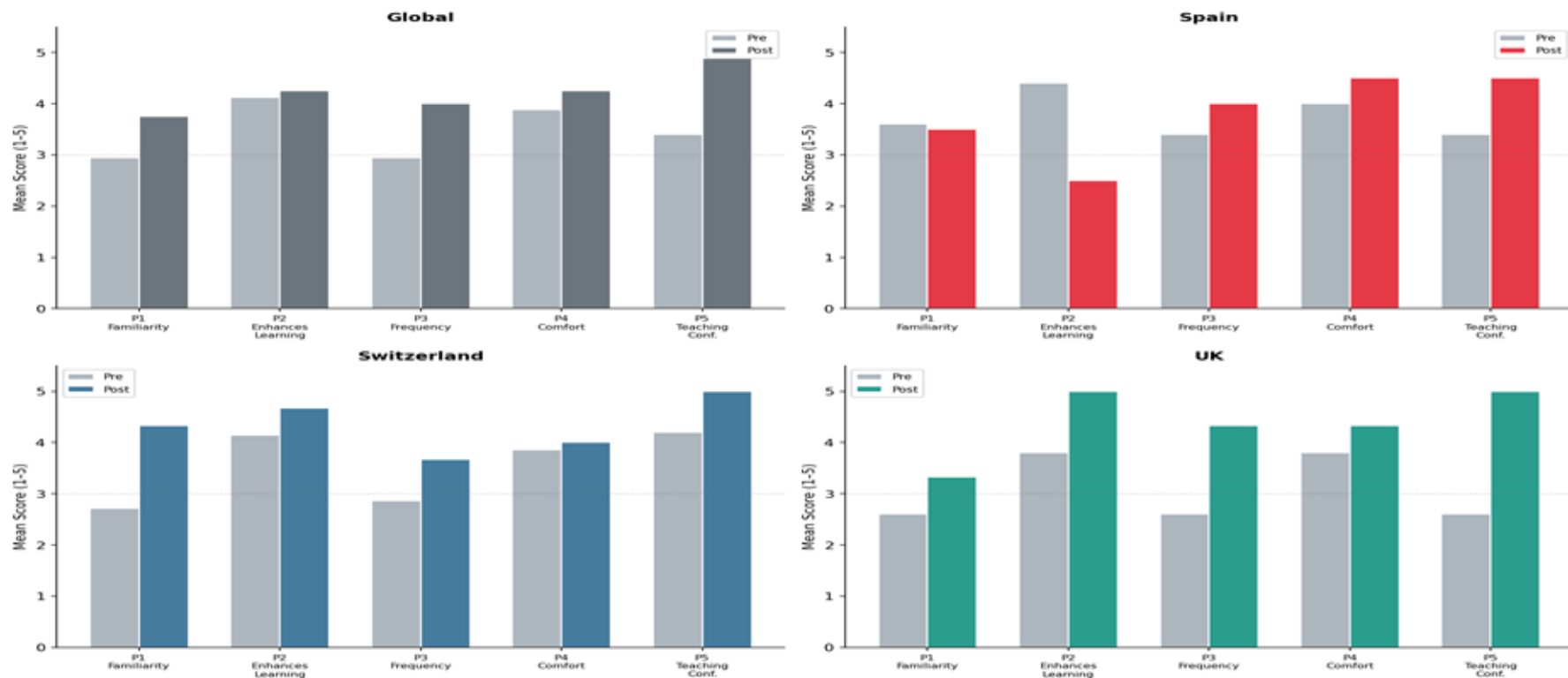
As a Group: As a group, we have decided to continue working together next year. We are also considering developing a webinar and a publication piece based on this project

Appendix

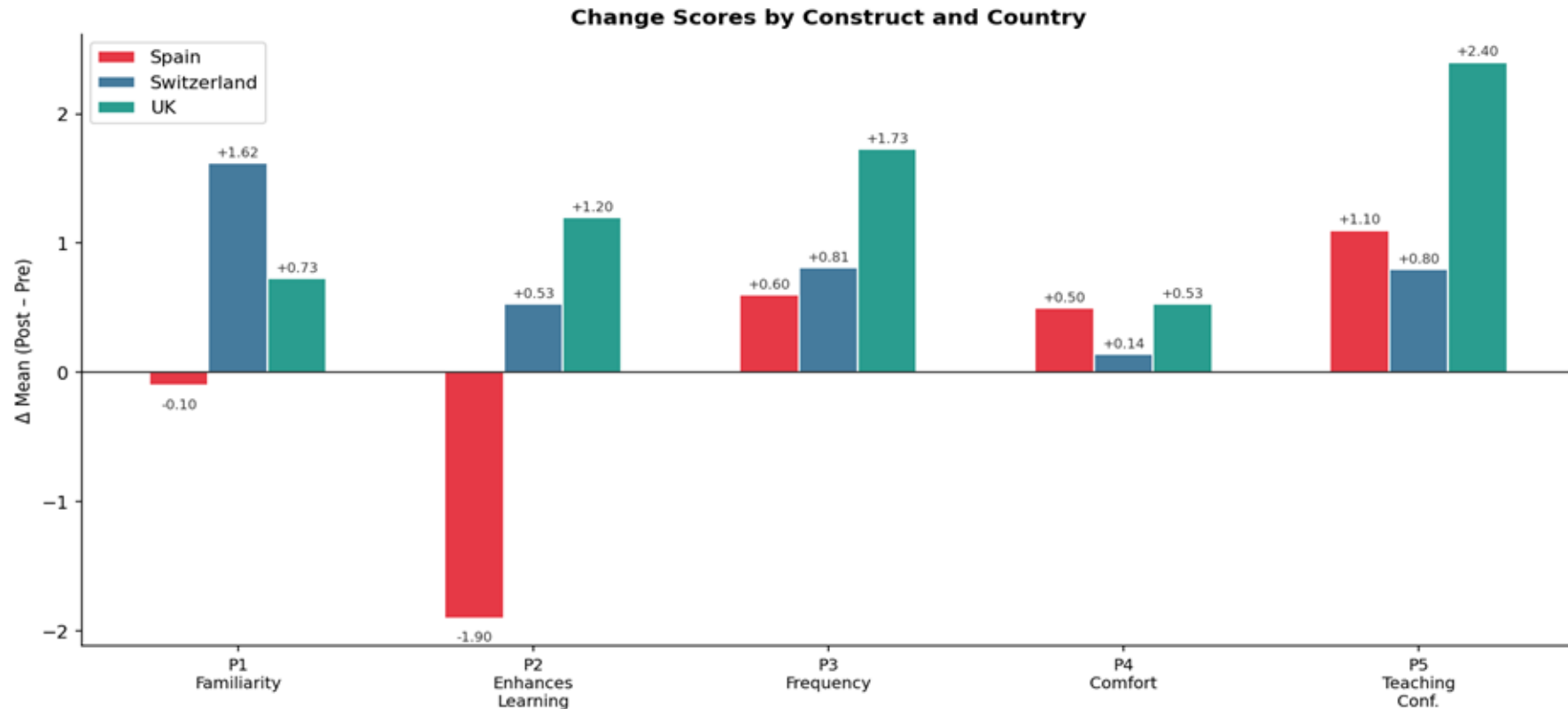
Quantitative Visualisations

Pre-Post Survey Comparison by Site and Global

Pre-Post Survey Comparison by Site and Global

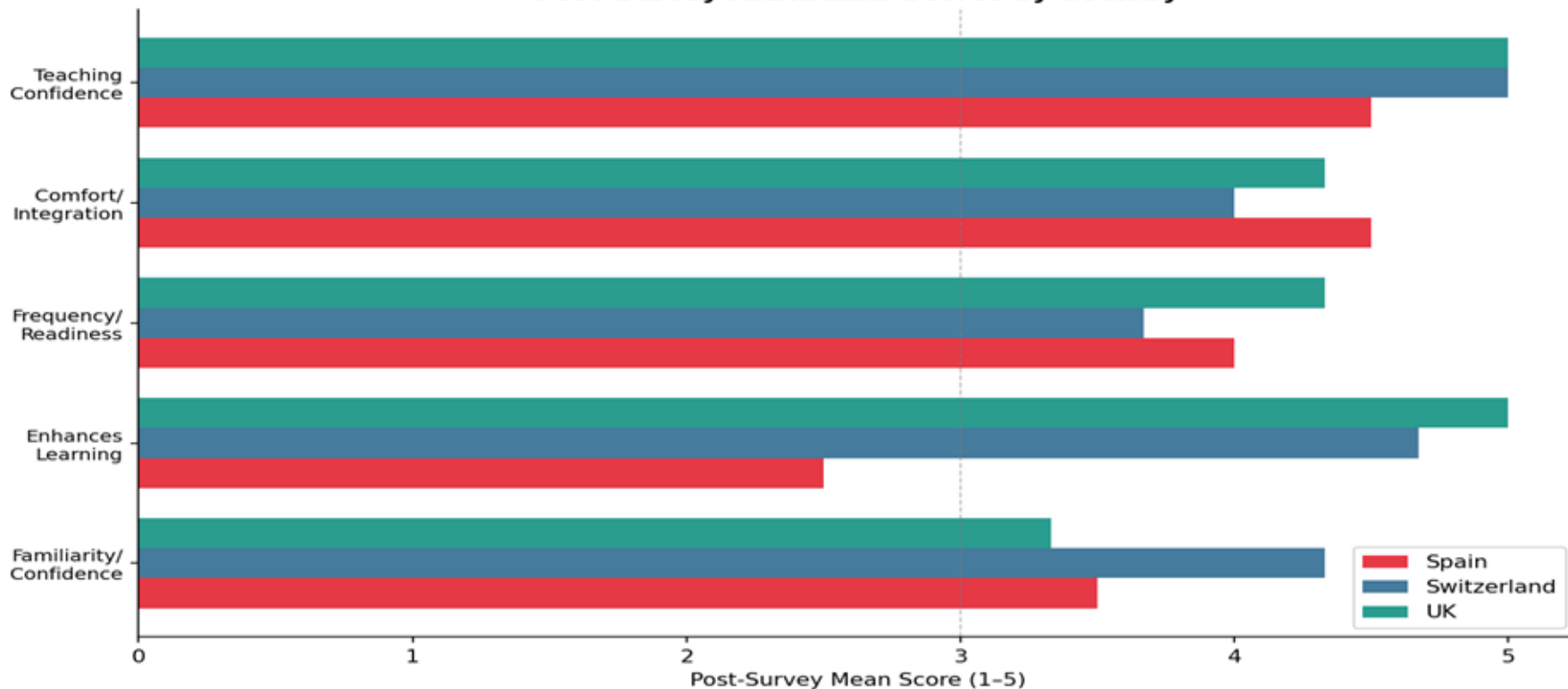


Change Scores (Delta Means) by Construct and Country

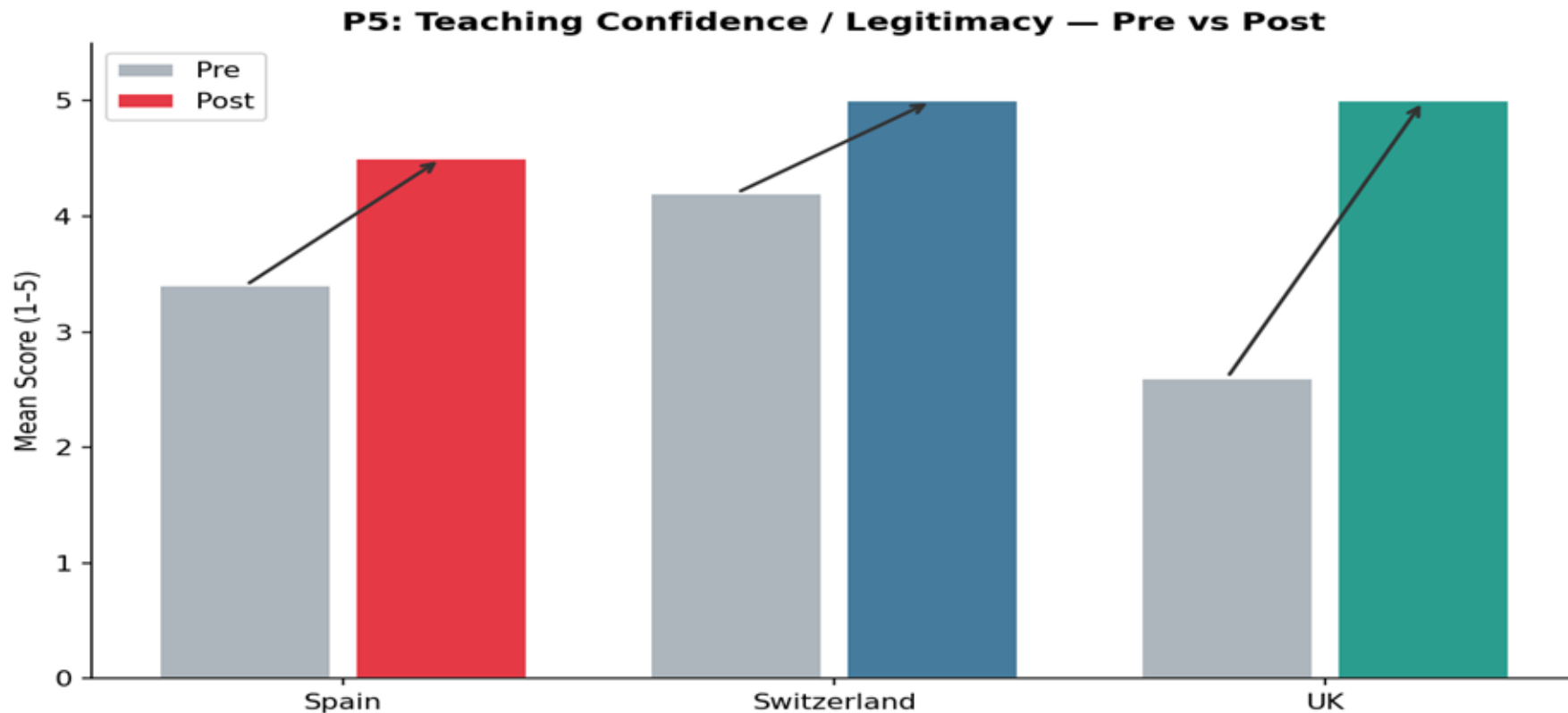


Post-Survey Attitudinal Scores by Country

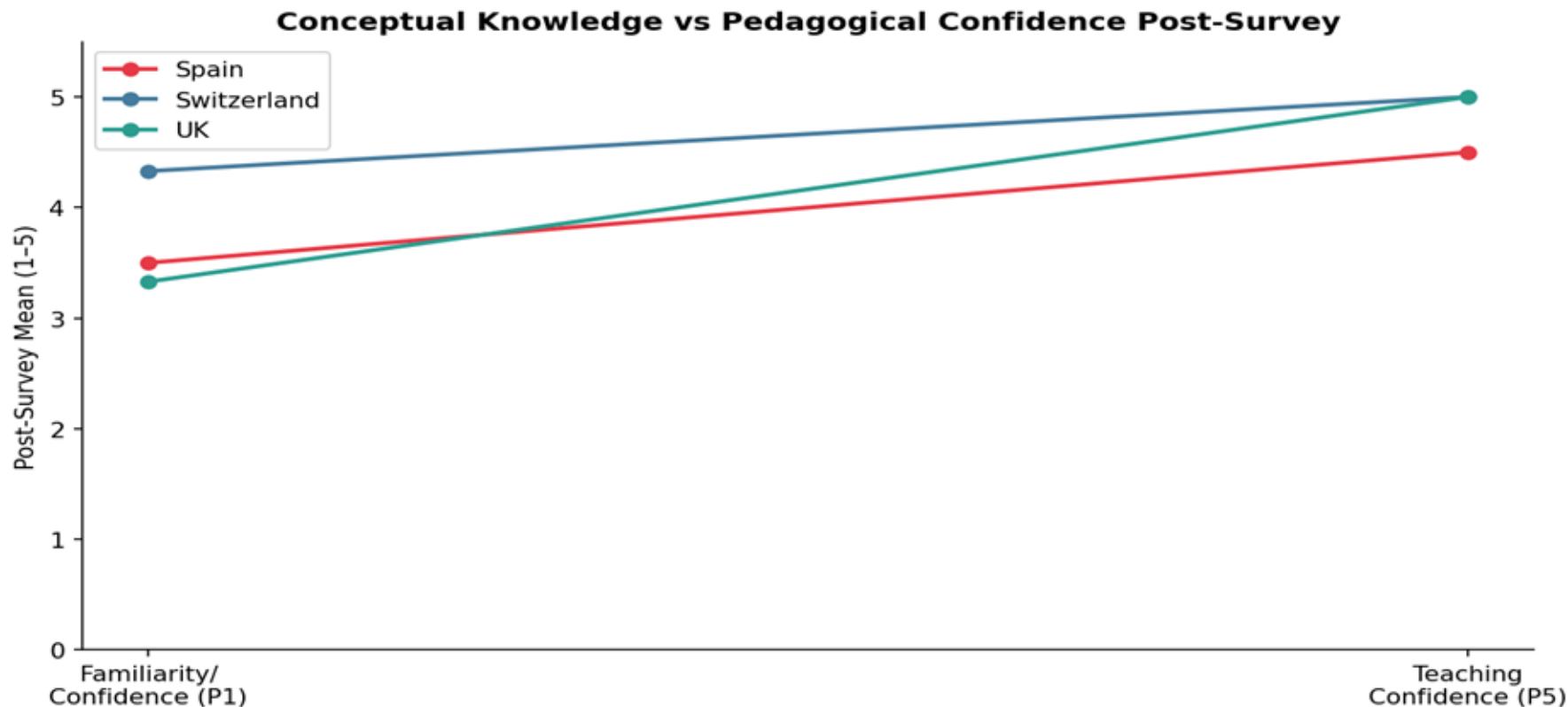
Post-Survey Attitudinal Scores by Country



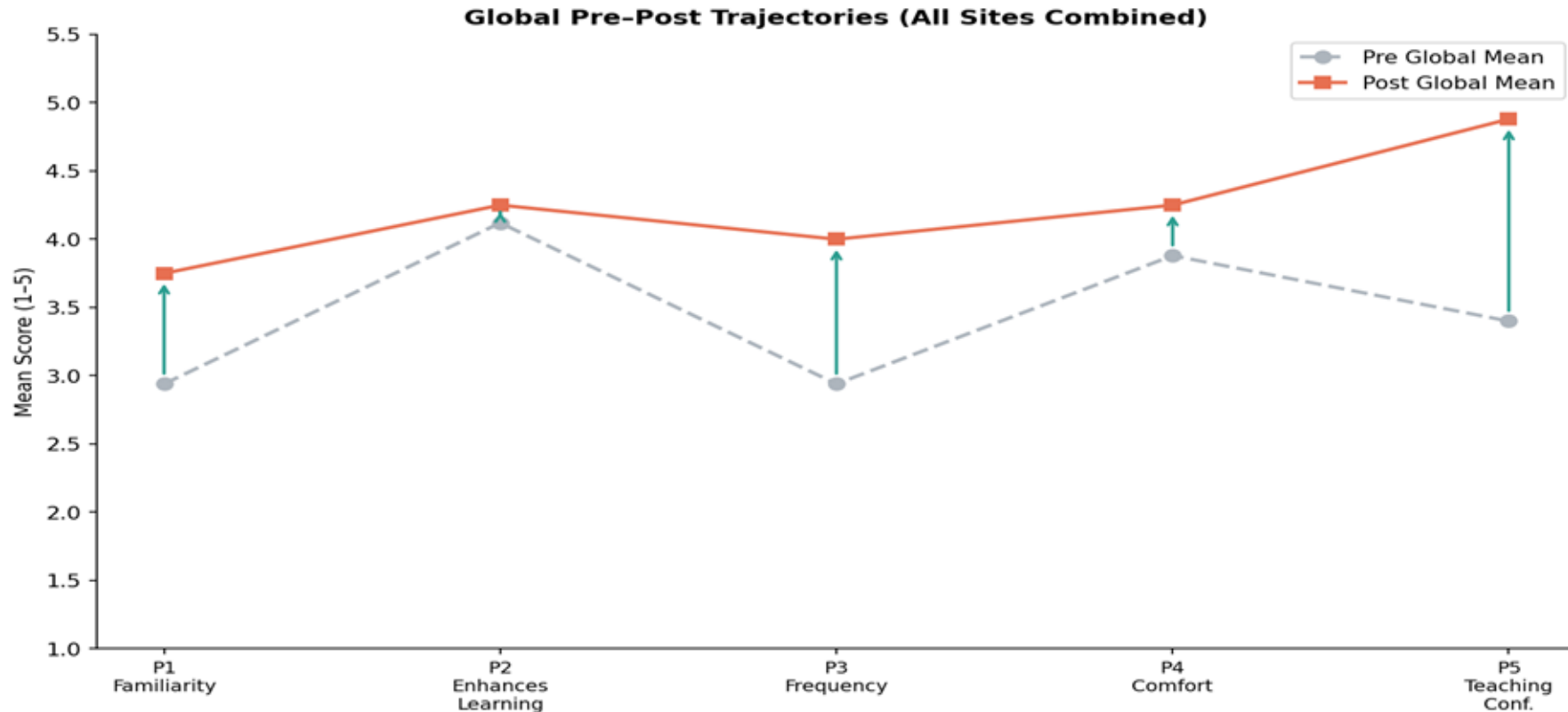
P5: Teaching Confidence / Legitimacy — Pre vs Post



Conceptual Knowledge vs Pedagogical Confidence Post-Survey

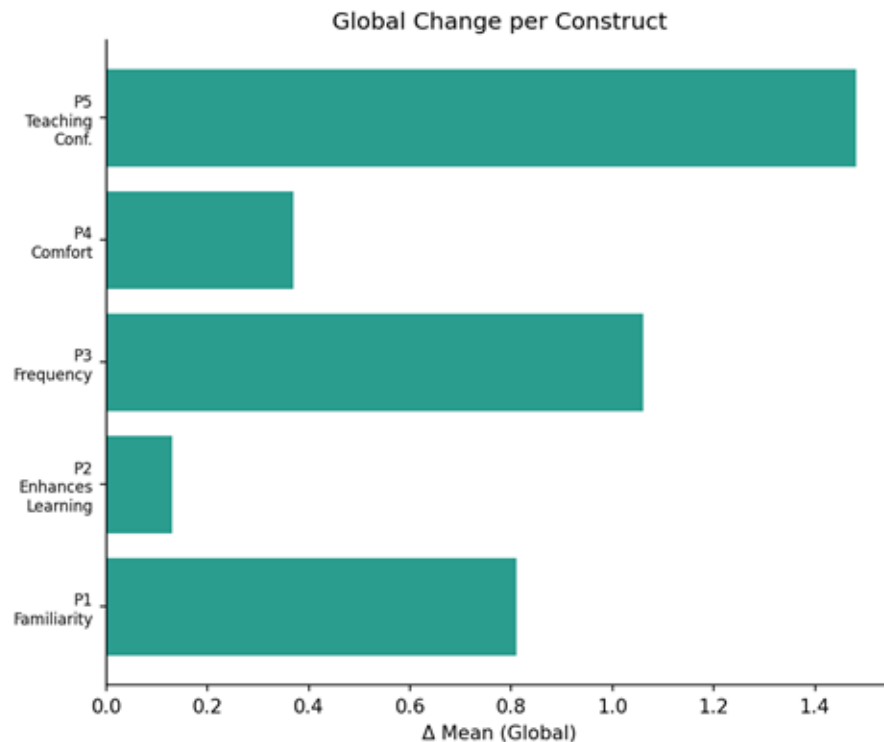
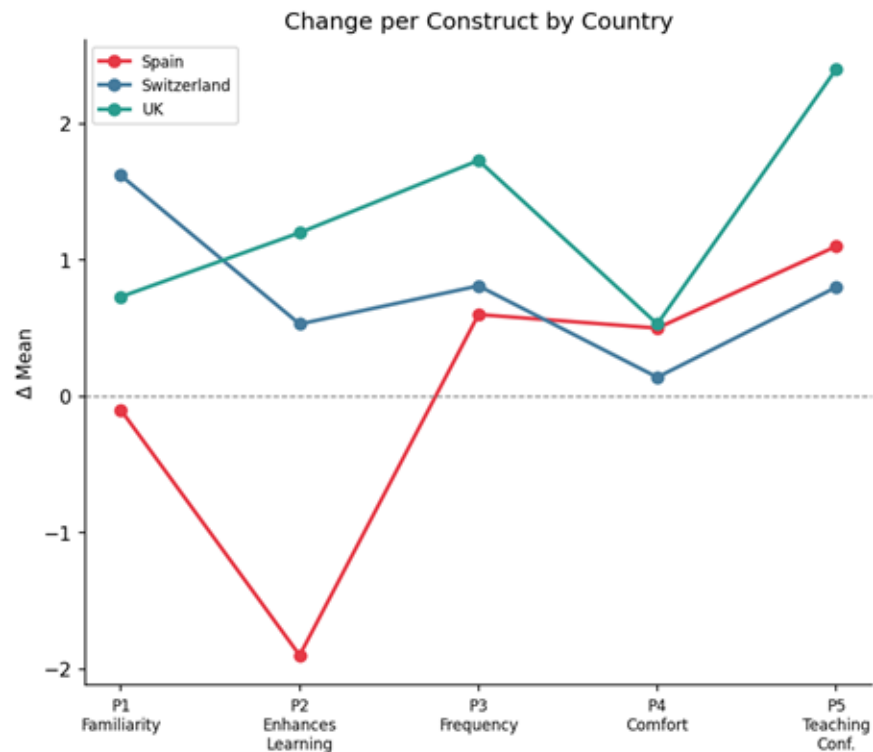


Global Pre-Post Trajectories (All Sites Combined)



Attitudinal Change and Pedagogical Intent

Attitudinal Change and Pedagogical Intent



Post-Survey Radar: All Attitudinal Constructs

