

**Action Research Study  
Submitted to the Education Institute's  
Action Research Database**

<b>Author(s):</b>  Maria Prasad
<b>Title of the Study:</b>  Effect of Using Criteria and Rubrics on Students' Presentation Skills
<b>Location or Institution (optional)</b>  Qatar Independent Preparatory School for Girls
<b>Abstract</b>  <p>The study was targeted to measure the effectiveness of using criteria and rubrics on the oral presentation skills of students. The presentations skills targeted in the criteria were – (Content Skills, Vocal Skills, Non-Vocal and General Skills).The sample included in our study consisted of an individual Grade 7 class comprised of 25 students. The design used in our research study was a pretest/posttest, intervention design. The pretest involved testing students' presentation skills without any prior criteria this was followed by exposing the students to criteria and rubrics (intervention) and then reexposing them to subsequent oral presentations (posttest). The duration of the research cycle was from February until the end of May, 2008.</p> <p>Tools used to collect data included observations made by teachers and peers, a questionnaire directed to students on the impact and usefulness of using "criteria and rubrics" and an interview of teachers.</p> <p>The implications of the study revealed that students showed significant improvement in their presentation skills and the use of criteria and rubrics proved to be an essential tool to enhance student performance.</p>
<b>Grade Level:</b> Preparatory
<b>Data Collection Methods:</b> Four tools were used to collect data. These tools include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student and teacher observations using rubrics</li><li>• Student questionnaires</li><li>• Teacher interviews</li></ul>
<b>Subject/Topic:</b> Science

# **Effect of Using Criteria and Rubrics on Students' Presentation Skills**

By  
Maria Prasad

**Introduction :** As one of the goals of the educational reform is to equip our students with essential lifetime skills and as one very important facet of learning is for our students to be able to communicate their learning, it was important to research and investigate if using specific criteria and rubrics helped improve our students' oral presentations. The drive for this research was therefore the impact and benefits these skills would have on our students.

**The Context:** The Science teachers at Qatar Independent Preparatory school found that students found it difficult to verbalize what knowledge they had acquired and in an attempt to improve their oral presentation skills wanted to find out the impact and benefits these skills would have on our students.

**Research Question :** Our Action Research Question was **"What is the effect of using criteria and rubrics on students' presentation skills?"** Three different tools were used to collect data, scoring sheets, questionnaires and interviews . The research study began in February 2008 and was conducted in three phases.

## **Research Process :**

Phase One: using the pretest - post test intervention design student presentation skills were conducted in 3 cycles

To begin with a set of criteria and rubrics for oral presentations were prepared keeping in mind the areas in which we wanted our students to show progress. ( Appendix I)

Cycle 1 – The sample chosen for study was grade 7 class comprising of 25 students. In the first cycle selected students were asked to orally present their work without giving them any criteria or rubrics.

Cycle 2 – The specific criteria and rubrics were discussed with the students and then they were re-exposed to oral presentations.

Cycle 3 – Students were exposed to giving oral presentations again. In each cycle peer assessment and teacher assessment data were collected and analyzed. ( Refer Appendix I-Figure 1)

## Phase Two: student questionnaire

A questionnaire comprising of 15 questions were given to the students of the class (25 students) to find out their views and opinions about the impact of using criteria and rubrics on their oral presentation skills. ( Appendix II ) . The results of the questionnaire were analysed. ( Refer Appendix II - Figure 2)

## Phase Three: teacher interviews

The teacher's interview comprised of 5 questions that were aimed to find out

teacher's views on the use of criteria and rubrics on student oral presentation skills. ( Appendix III). The interview was transcribed and analyzed. ( Refer Appendix III- Figure 3)

### **The Findings :**

The results of peer assessment and teacher assessment of students' oral presentation skills of all the 3 cycles when analyzed showed that in general students showed gradual progress and improvement in their presentation skills in the areas of content, verbal, non verbal and general skills. The students were rated into the categories of Advanced, Proficient, Basic or Below basic as per the rubrics.

Results of Peer assessment			
Areas of testing	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Content	24% Advanced 38% Proficient 26% Basic 12% Below basic	31% Advanced 35% Proficient 21% Basic 13% Below basic	43% Advanced 32% Proficient 17% Basic 8% Below basic
Verbal skills	29% Advanced 29% Proficient 27% Basic 15% Below basic	24% Advanced 28% Proficient 29% Basic 19% Below basic	41% Advanced 30% Proficient 19% Basic 10% Below basic
Nonverbal skills	20% Advanced 32% Proficient 34% Basic 14% Below basic	25% Advanced 23% Proficient 29% Basic 23% Below basic	40% Advanced 32% Proficient 15% Basic 13% Below basic
General skills	25% Advanced 30% Proficient 23% Basic 22% Below basic	39% Advanced 21% Proficient 23% Basic 17% Below basic	35% Advanced 35% proficient 19% Basic 11% Below basic

Results of Teacher assessment			
Areas of testing	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Content	0% Advanced 31% Proficient 50% Basic 19% Below basic	0% Advanced 36% Proficient 64% Basic 0% Below basic	0% Advanced 50% Proficient 44% Basic 6% Below basic
Verbal skills	0% Advanced 8% Proficient 58% Basic 34% Below basic	0% Advanced 23% Proficient 71% Basic 6% Below basic	6% Advanced 44% Proficient 46% Basic 4% Below basic
Nonverbal skills	0% Advanced 4% Proficient 33% Basic 63% Below basic	0% Advanced 4% Proficient 75% Basic 21% Below basic	0% Advanced 54% Proficient 33% Basic 13% Below basic
General skills	0% Advanced 0% Proficient 33% Basic 67% Below basic	0% Advanced 44% Proficient 56% Basic 0% Below basic	0% Advanced 44% proficient 39% Basic 17% Below basic

The student questionnaire mainly aimed at finding out :

- If students liked presenting their work orally

- If the task was easier using criteria and rubrics
- If watching peers made them feel more confident
- If fluency in English was the barrier that students faced

The main points that emerged from the student answers to the questionnaire were :

- 80% of the students strongly agreed that they enjoyed presenting their work.
- 65%strongly agreed that Presentation skills were an important lifetime skill.
- Majority of the students agreed that it was beneficial to use rubrics to improve presentations
- Many students were of the opinion that they felt more confident watching peers present
- A majority of the students felt that more than language fluency acquiring the right skills would enable them to be good presenters

The teacher interviews had focused on the following 3 main aspects :

- The difference in presentations before and after using criteria and rubrics
- Ways to improve presentation in addition to using criteria and rubrics
- Student behavior and attitudes that was of concern during presentations

Transcription and analysis of the interviews brought out the following points:

- Most of the teachers felt that students had made a gradual progress and the use of criteria and rubrics was a valuable tool for self assessment.
- Teachers also felt that initial presentations were haphazard and lacked organization but with repeated exposure students developed confidence and improved in their oral skills.

### **Reflections :**

An overall reflection of the research process, procedures and its implications revealed that students did make good progress with the use of criteria and rubrics on their presentations skills but some areas of concern while using rubrics were the level of honesty exhibited by students, favouritism shown towards friends and respect for fellow students. Teachers also felt that in addition to rubrics modeling in front of the class, using students as models or showing them video clips of good presenters was an additional way to improve presentation skills

### **Next Steps :**

Provide students with some value education on the importance of being fair and honest before introducing the same criteria and rubrics in other classes.

# ***APPENDICES***

## ***Oral Presentation skills***



*Verbal Skills*

*Non verbal skills*

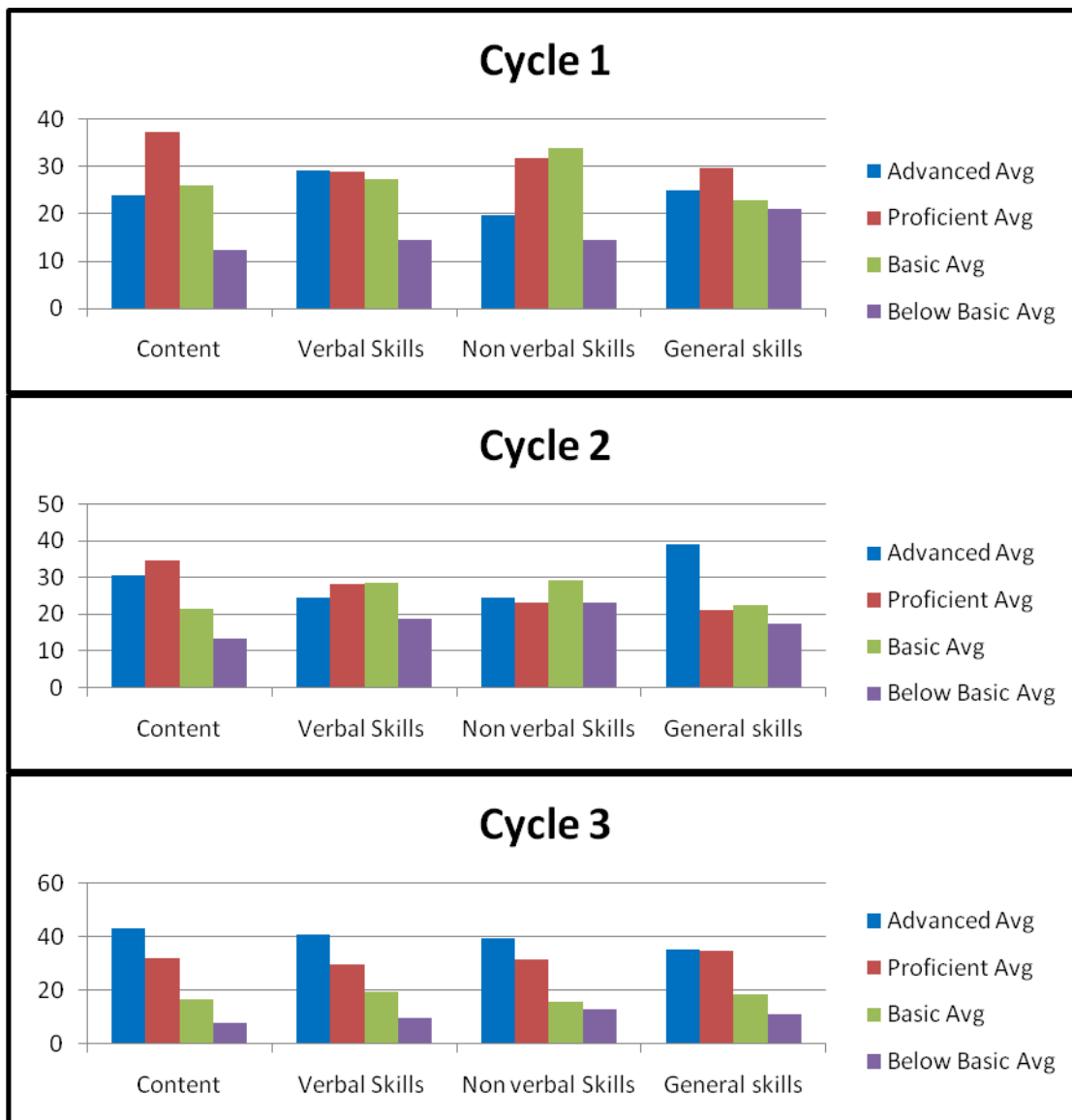
*General Skills*

# Appendix I

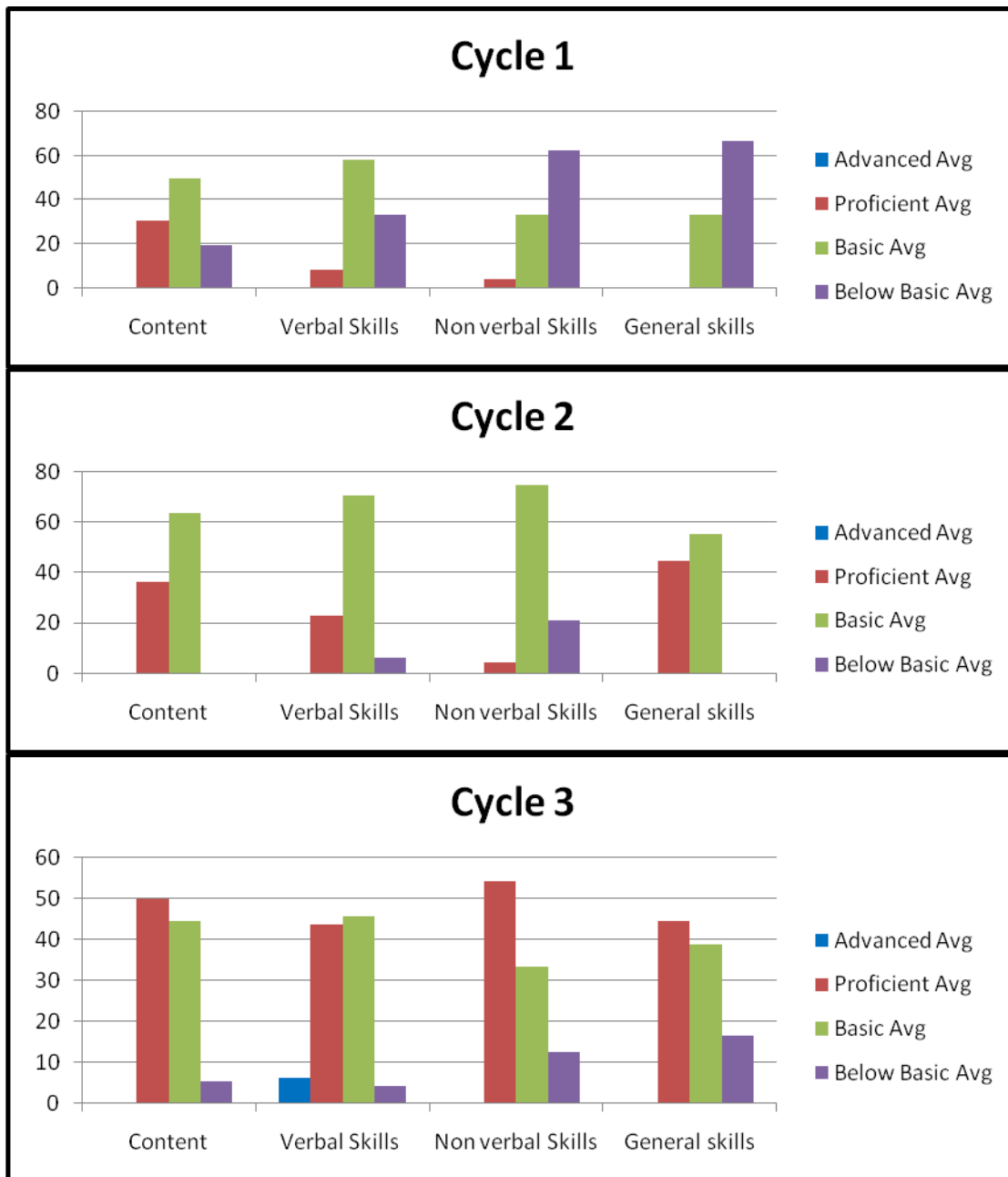
Oral Presentation Criteria and Rubrics					
Areas	Criteria	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic
Content	<b>Topic Announcement</b>	Clearly states the topic and explains what it covers	Clearly states the topic but does not explain what it covers	Audience has a vague idea of the topic	Audience has no idea what the topic is about
	<b>Organization</b>	Information is presented in a logical sequence using specific examples, flows well and shows a clear conclusion	Most of the information is presented in a logical sequence, and is quite well organized	The information is loosely connected, the flow and organization is choppy	Information presented is disjointed, lacks flow and organization is very choppy
	<b>Knowledge</b>	Student shows complete knowledge with explanation and elaboration	Student is at ease with content but fails to elaborate	Student is uncomfortable with information and is able to answer some questions	Student does not have grasp of information and cannot answer any questions
	<b>Mechanics</b>	Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors	Presentation has no more than 2 misspellings and/or grammatical errors	Presentation has 3 – 4 misspellings and/or grammatical errors	Presentation has more than 5 misspellings and /or grammatical errors
	<b>Time Frame</b>	Presentation is complete within 2 minutes of allotted time+/-	Presentation is complete within 3-4 minutes of allotted time+/-	Presentation is complete within 5-6 minutes of allotted time+/-	Presentation is too long or too short, 10min more or below the allotted time
	<b>Props / Visual Aids</b>	Student uses several visuals that show creativity and adds and supports the presentation	Student uses 1 visual that shows some creativity and makes the presentation better	Student occasionally uses visuals that rarely supports the presentation	Student uses no visuals or the visual chosen detracts from the presentation
Vocal / Verbal Skills	<b>Speaks clearly</b>	Speaks clearly and distinctly all the time and mispronounces no words	Speaks clearly and distinctly all the time but mispronounces 1 word	Speaks clearly all the time and mispronounces 2-3 words	Does not speak clearly or mumbles and mispronounces many words
	<b>Uses complete sentences</b>	Always speaks in complete sentences ( 90 – 100%)	Mostly speaks in complete sentences ( 80 - 89%)	Sometimes speaks in complete sentences ( 70 – 79%)	Rarely speaks in complete sentences (below 70%)
	<b>Stays on Topic</b>	Stays on topic all the time	Stays on topic most of the time	Stays on topic some of the time	Does not stay on the topic at all
	<b>Volume</b>	Loud enough to be heard by all the audience throughout the presentation	Loud enough to be heard by the audience at least 90% of the time	Loud enough to be heard by the audience at least 80% of the time	Too soft to be heard by all the audience
	<b>Pitch</b>	Pitch was used to convey emotions effectively in the presentation	Pitch was often used but the emotions conveyed sometimes did not fit the presentation	Pitch was rarely used or the emotions it conveyed often did not fit the presentation	Pitch was never used in the presentation
	<b>Pauses</b>	Pauses were effectively used 2 or more times to improve meaning	Pauses were used at least once effectively to improve meaning	Pauses were used but were not effective in improving meaning	Pauses were not used at all
	<b>Vocabulary</b>	Uses vocabulary appropriate for the audience and extends vocabulary by defining words new to audience	Uses vocabulary appropriate for the audience and uses 1-2 new words but does not define them	Uses vocabulary appropriate for the audience but does not use any new words	Uses vocabulary not suitable for audience or not appropriate for the presentation
	<b>Comprehension</b>	Student is able to answer all questions posed about the topic	Student is able to answer most questions posed about the topic	Student is able to answer most questions posed about the topic	Student is unable to answer questions posed about the topic
Non vocal / Non verbal skills	<b>Posture</b>	Stands up straight , looks relaxed and confident	Stands up straight	Sometimes stands up straight	Slouches or slumps during the presentation
	<b>Eye Contact</b>	Constantly looks at the audience during the presentation	Occasionally looks at someone or some groups during presentation	Does not scan the audience only focus attention on one part of the class	Does not attempt to look at the audience, reads notes all the time
	<b>Facial Expressions</b>	Facial expressions used generate a strong interest and enthusiasm in the topic	Facial expressions used sometimes generate a strong interest and enthusiasm in the topic	Facial expressions used try to generate an interest and enthusiasm in the topic but seem faked	Facial expressions were not used or did not generate any interest and enthusiasm in the topic
	<b>Gestures</b>	Hand gestures used appear spontaneously	Hand gestures used appear quite natural	Hand gestures are attempted but don't	No hand gestures are demonstrated

		and very natural		appear too natural	
<b>General skills</b>	<b>Listens to other Presentations</b>	Listens intently all the time and does not make distracting noises or movements	Listens intently most of the time and does not make much distracting noises or movements	Listens intently sometimes and does make distracting noises or movements at times	Does not listen intently or makes distracting noises or movements
	<b>Collaboration with Peers</b>	Almost always listens to, respects, shares with, and supports the efforts & contributions of others .	Usually listens to, respects, shares with, and supports the efforts & contributions of others	Often listens to, respects, shares with, and supports the efforts of & contributions of others.	Rarely listens to, respects, shares with, and supports the efforts & contributions of others. (shows negative attitude )
	<b>Self Reflection</b>	Shows high ability to self reflect, identify most areas of weakness and improvement and set future goals.	Shows moderate ability to self reflect, identify some areas of weakness and improvement and set future goals.	Shows ability to self reflects, identify few areas of weakness and.	Shows poor or no ability to self reflect, identify areas of weakness and improvement and unable to set future goals.

(Figure 1A) – Peer assessment results



**(Figure 1B) – Teacher assessment results**



# Appendix II

**Introduction :** The topic for our Action Research is – Use of Criteria and Rubrics in Oral Presentations.

**Preliminary Observation & Reflection :** Students need to be able to present their learning in order to gain ownership of the learning process. Most often students either lack oral presentation skills or fail to be able to organize their presentation effectively, in all they miss out on verbal and nonverbal skills. In order to train our students and make them more confident and good presenters of knowledge we decided to employ some criteria and rubrics and see its effect on our students' presentation skills.

**Purpose of the Questionnaire:** The aim of this questionnaire is to find out students' views and opinions on the use of criteria and rubrics in Oral presentations.

**Instructions:** Kindly take some time to reflect and answer the questions honestly as the data gathered from this will help us evaluate and take decisions on the validity of this Action research.

I assure you that all these data will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous and the data will be used purely to decide our next action plan and will remain the property of the School.

## Questionnaire – Use of Criteria and Rubrics in Oral Presentation

Name : _____	Grade Level: _____
(optional)	
Age: _____	Native Language : _____

**Tic**  
**k**  
**the**  
**app**

**ropriate box**

1. I like to present my work orally						
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

2. I feel confident when I present my work orally						
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

3. I feel shy to present my work orally in front of others						
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. Using criteria and rubrics makes the presentation task easy						
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

**5. With continuous use of criteria and rubrics my presentation skill has improved**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>

**6. Using criteria and rubrics for presentation is just a waste of time**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>

**7. Watching my friends present makes me feel confident**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>

**8. Watching my friends makes me feel nervous (shy).**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>

**9. Using criteria and rubrics did not help me improve my presentation skills**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>

**10. Presentation skills are important lifetime skills**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>

**11. I don't like to present my work orally as I am not fluent in English**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>

**If you agreed with Question 11 then please answer these:****11.A If I could present orally in Arabic I would like to present**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>

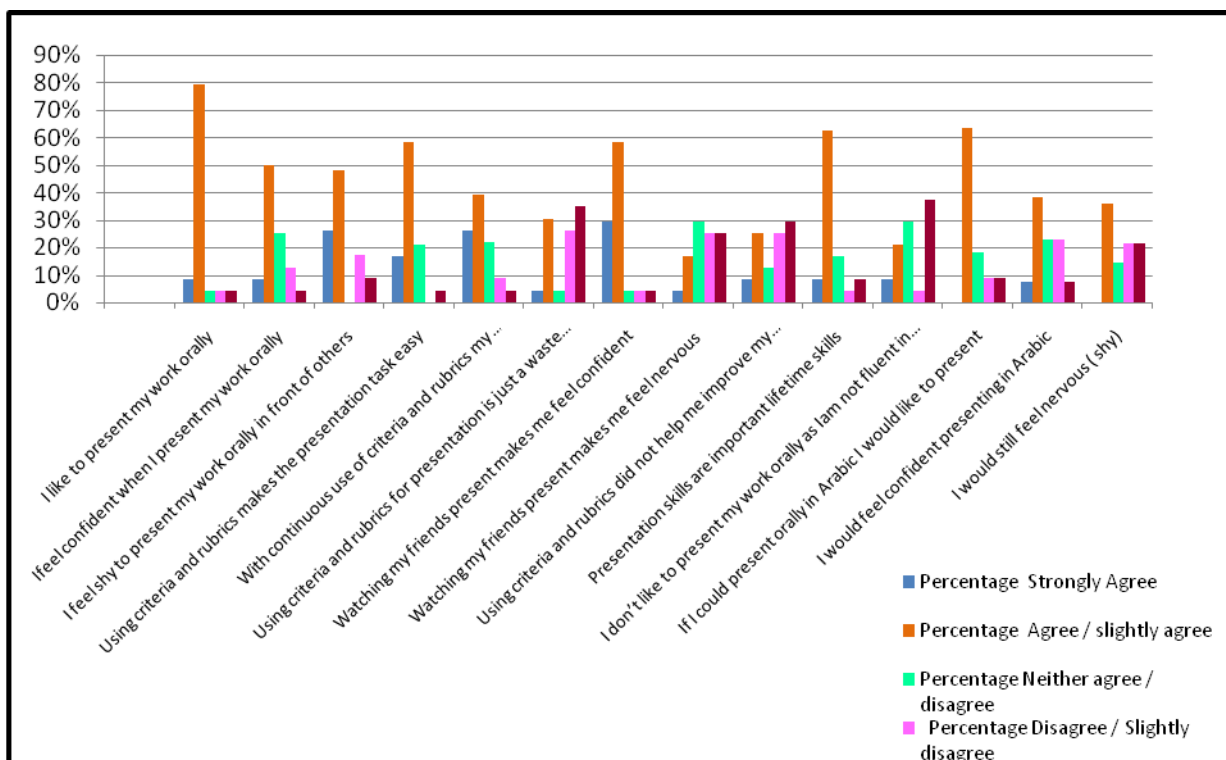
**11.B I would feel confident presenting in Arabic**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<b>11. C I would still feel nervous (shy)</b>						
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>

<b>Did you benefit in any way using criteria and rubrics in Oral presentations</b>	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>How ?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Thank You**

**(Figure 2) – Student questionnaire results**



# Appendix III

## Interview Questions for Teachers

Dear Teachers,

Our Action Research is on Student Oral Presentation Skills and whether the use of Criteria and Rubrics helps make our students improve their Oral presentation skills.

Kindly reflect on what your views are about the topic and feel free to voice your opinions. We assure you that your names and identity will be kept anonymous and your answers strictly confidential .

Thanking You for your time and cooperation.

Science Department

1	Do you think using criteria and rubrics has had any impact on students' presentation skills? How do you know?
2	What do think is different in students' presentations skills before and after using criteria and rubrics?
3	How do you think presentation skills can be improved in addition to using criteria and rubrics?
4	Is there anything you would like to change or modify to enhance student presentation skills?
5	Did you notice any behavior or attitude among students that is of concern in relation to presentation skills.