Comprehension

In the cases where people made comments regarding the comprehension aspect of my 3MT presentation, they usually suggested covering more background material. I can't say I blame people for feeling this way, I certainly wanted to cover more background. It was probably easy to miss out on just one sentence of background, and lose the flow, as I rushed to cover what I thought would be just enough to explain my research work. Where a lack of information is concerned, I expect this to be a problem specific to the 3MT, or other modes of presentation with strict content limits. With more comments regarding my background material than my experimental plan, I would provide more information about the disease, monitoring process, and ultrasound technology.

Engagement

With the engagement metrics being somewhat subjective, such as making people want to know more, or conveying enthusiasm, not many comments were made relating directly to engagement. I noticed that I lost points a number of times on making people want to know more, and maintaining the audience's attention. I suspect the cause of these problems is not general, but stems from other issues. For one, I need to provide more background, as discussed under the Comprehension heading, and I spoke too quickly, as discussed under the Communication heading.

Communication

The most consistent comment I received was probably that I spoke too quickly. I will be the first to admit this. I began the presentation knowing that I couldn't get hung up on forgotten points, or I would go over 3 minutes. My aim was to provide enough background for people to understand what scoliosis is and why it's important, and how tracked ultrasound can be used to monitor it, and what motivates ultrasound. I knew this was a lot of material, but thought I could balance it with a detailed description of my research plan describing what I plan to measure and how I will validate the method. The result was that I tried to cover too much by speaking too quickly. Speaking too quickly is naturally balanced against the amount of content I wanted to convey for a short 3 minute presentation. My experience is that, if I've gone over my content and aren't too nervous, then I speak at a better rate.

I was interested to see a few comments saying that I looked at the floor a bit much. I find it interesting because I didn't realize I was doing that. One classmate made the observation that it seemed to be when I was remembering something. It could be that my rushed mind, desperately trying to recall points as they came up, was too occupied to maintain appropriate body language at all times as well. However, while giving a presentation in Prof. Akl's Natural Computing course early the next week, I caught my eyes being drawn to my slides. Apparently, I will have to make a conscious effort to make consistent eye contact with the audience. Even presentations for which I have ample time, and enough material to fill it, I become nervous enough to be engrossed in what I want to must say, forgetting the audience I am saying it to.

Overall presentation style

The most notable comments regarding my presentation style were about the communication aspects. I was consistently told that I spoke too quickly, which I agree. I will try to limit the content of future presentations to move my tempo from natural conversation, to one in which new ideas can be understood at the rate they are being spoken. The only remedy to make more eye contact I can think of is good preparation for calm nerves, and constant vigilance throughout presentations to practice getting it right.

Overall presentation style