

# Communicating Science

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# Today's agenda

- Reasons for communicating your research to non-specialists
- The scientist's challenges
- Communicating with a broad audience:
  - The rhetorical situation
  - The content
  - The structure
  - The style
  - The presentation
- PhD student talks – game rules for the audience



# Why communicating your research to non-specialists?

- The public benefit - let society benefit from scientific findings
- Be able to cooperate with colleagues with different educational background
- Researchers writing popular science get a higher citation frequency (Phillips et al. 1991)
- Deepens your understanding



# Science students writing popular articles about degree project

## Students' strengths

Most students manage to

- write informative and catchy titles
- write an interesting introduction.

(Pelger, S., Santesson, S. & Josefsson, G. 2009)



## Students' weaknesses

Many students are unable to

- highlight the key message
- expand the perspective
- argue the relevance of the project
- generalize and speculate.



## The rhetorical working process

- Analyze
- Invent
- Structure
- Formulate
- Present



# Useful topics

- Environment
- Health
- Economy
- Individual
- Society
- Future



# Ladder of abstraction

generalization

comparison,  
metaphor

example



# Structure

## Scientific article

- Introduction (give theoretical background, present material)
- Method
- Results
- Discussion

## Lecture to non-experts

- Opening (to make audience attentive and teachable)
- Results, discussion, speculation
- Conclusion



# Presentation programs are useful for

- Visual support
- Structural support
- Memorizing support

(Renberg 2005)



# Conclusions

- Use the rhetorical working process!
- Change perspectives!
- Use a rhetorical structure!
- Remember: a public lecture is a rhetorical genre



# When listening to your fellow PhD students

- What contributes to fulfilling the aim of the lecture?
- What can we learn from the lecture?



# References

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