I received a late booking to prepare a presentation about Lunar Ranging for “Astronomins dag och natt” held throughout Sweden during 8.10. The original title “Lunar ranging and its applications”, which was submitted to in the GTS registration form was changed prior to the event to “How far away is the moon?” to better suit the audience at the event. Thus the registered title differs from the one that is listed at e.g the event website.

The written reviews are given as separate attachments.

Reflection on the Popular Science Presentation held at 8.10. at Slottskogobservatoriet

Initially I thought this presentation would be challenging. The audience would likely range from astronomy enthusiasts, students, even professionals and on the other hand completely laymen, kids, and other people. I chose to make the presentation to build up from easy-to-grasp concepts and analogies to more complicated concepts. This gave the whole audience the chance to jump on board – if you do not create some kind of context where they can start to build their own mental structure of the topic, it will be impossible for them to follow the presentation in a meaningful way. I anticipated some of the things would be too simple/too hard for some, and based on the audience feedback this was indeed the case.

I was somewhat nervous prior to the presentation whether the content would be deemed too mundane by the more experienced crowd. Normally my presentations are given to my peers or higher, and it just feels 'weird' giving a more simplified talk. I should avoid this way of thinking. It is also necessary to pay attention to all the people in the audience, not only the ones you might want to 'impress'. Also, to keep in mind that, at least in a context like this, a presentation is good when most people get the most out of it.

I think that the way of using a lot of analogies is really effective in introducing otherwise complex concepts quickly to an wide range of audience. Based on the written and oral feedback, I think my main takeaway is that: don't overcomplicate and easy-to-grasp analogies work very well.

Time-wise, I should decrease the number of slides and trust my ability to have enough to say with fewer slides (rev. 1, com. 1). The time constraint more apparent after delays due to technical difficulties in the beginning. However, I think I managed to ad lib some parts effectively to keep things on time, which was also mentioned in the feedback. Nevertheless, I should really go for fewer slides, and maybe include things as backup slides, if needed.

A particularly interesting note was one of language: I gave the presentation in English, but also mentioned after the presentation that questions in swedish are welcome. One comment really liked that but said, that it would be even better to say that from the beginning to really make people feel at home.