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# **Book of Abstracts**

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# Science with and for society: The popularization of Terminology within the domain of Nutrition

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This proposal falls within the scope of the theoretical and methodological assumptions of Terminology, perceived as a “science studying the structure, formation, development, usage and management of terminologies in various subject fields” (ISO: 1087). Taking a two-pronged approach – linguistic and conceptual – the terminological work proposed here aims at organizing concepts and terms in order to improve specialized communication, sustained in the knowledge shared by the members that comprise the communities of experts. Contemporary societies based on information and knowledge, and relying on increasingly democratized technologies, have paved the way for science to step out of the specialized contexts in which it is produced and become available to a non-expert audience. However, contents – concepts, terms, definitions – are seldomly organized or presented in an adequate manner, since their language is not adjusted to a general audience. The UN 2030 Agenda stresses the need to adequate language register and terminological resources to citizens. It is no coincidence that citizen engagement with science is one of the central tenets of UN 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, where “science with and for society” is one of the priorities. Engaging citizens in the debate and co-creation of scientific knowledge – embodied in the notion of citizen science (Serrano Sanz et al., 2015) – requires a communicational adjustment that must be achieved by the terminologist-mediator, involving the main agents of knowledge and respective specialized discourses. We understand mediation as “un processus structuré, conçu et mené par le terminologue, qui consiste à médier une discussion visant l’obtention d’un consensus sur des données terminologiques, préalablement organisées, de la part d’une communauté d’experts appartenant à un même domaine de spécialité ou dans le cadre d’un projet commun” (Silva & Costa, 2019), whose aim is to popularize the definitions of concepts enabling the transition from the specialized level to the popular one without any loss of scientific accuracy.

To better illustrate our purposes, we intend to describe the methodology used in *Alimentopia – Utopian Foodways*<sup>10</sup>, a project in the scope of nutritional sciences that aims to create a nutritional database for non-experts. We will focus on the methodology employed in that project to write popularized definitions, which we called “descriptive definitions”. By “descriptive definition” we mean a text that stems from a popularization process that starts with the analysis of scientific definitions or defining contexts, which anchor concept and term so as to be understood by a non-expert audience.

Starting with a nutritional corpus built within the scope of the multidisciplinary project *Alimentopia – Utopian Foodways*, we used Sketch Engine<sup>11</sup> to identify the contexts where we can find the lexical and semantical elements that allow us to recognize the characteristics of the concepts we want to define. Based on linguistic information, validated by experts, we propose descriptive definitions aimed at popularizing knowledge. With this methodological result, we intend to highlight the importance of the accuracy and correctness of natural language definitions to ensure that communication is adapted to a non-expert audience.

## References

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<sup>10</sup> Research project founded by FCT/COMPETE, which offers a multi-disciplinary approach to the discussion about future conditions of food production and consumption through holistic and prospective utopian thinking: <http://alimentopia.oxys.pt>. Leader: Fátima Vieira, University of Porto.

<sup>11</sup> Sketch Engine is a tool to explore how language works: <https://www.sketchengine.eu/>

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