האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

Food Policy and Securitization in Israel

Shoshi Griver

Adviser: Prof. Itay Fischhendler

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

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Barak Obama's- Symposium on Global Agriculture and *Food Security*:

"also critical to focus on the urgent challenge… the injustice of chronic hunger; the need for long-term **food security**", "So **food security** is a moral imperative, but it's also an economic imperative."

Angela Merkel- the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2012

"It will therefore remain crucial that we continue to work on our agenda at the next G20 meeting in Mexico… along with green growth, **sustainable growth, as well as food security, climate protection and energy.**"

Defining Food Security

We do not necessarily pause for much thought when coming across the term **food security-** and defining it may seem almost intuitive to us, this is not necessarily the case (Buzan et al. 1997; Trombetta, 2008).

Research Question

This paper will examine

Who were the political actors who used food securitization language?

How did they define the term food security?

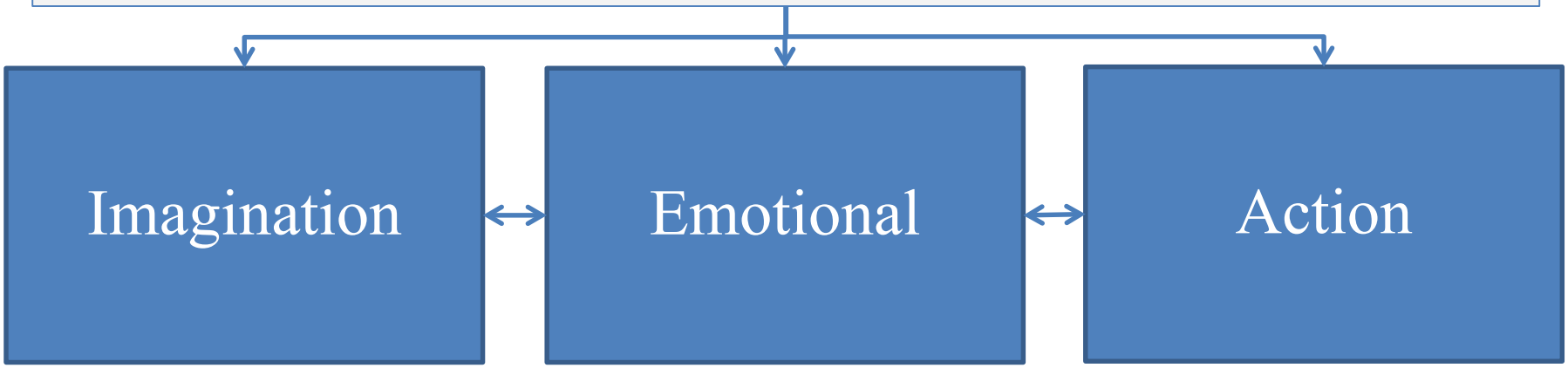
What were the driving agendas behind the actions taken in the name of *food security*?

Framing and Language

What is Framing?

The ***framing*** in communications refers to the words, images, phrases, and presentation styles that a speaker uses.

Words and phrases are used to trigger and activate different parts of our brain, and political actors often use these words to trigger a response (Hall, 1997).



Security Framing Of Natural Resources

If security used to be a concept that was divided into **"lack of" or "safety from",** now we associate food and natural resource with national security

This is because we view resources such as food, or lack there of, as an issue that can impact our physical security and welfare (Tweeten, 1999).

Securitization Theory

Political actors who exploit security language in order to defend matters of national security using policy.

The Copenhagen School's premise is that by using the word security to describe an issue it then becomes a security issue (Buzan et al. 1997).

A security threat is not an objective truth but rather an issue that has been transformed into a threat to national security through political speech (Trombetta, 2008).

Identifying Securitization Language

Suggestion to the public of a sense of **urgency, prioritization, and survival** (Fischhendler, Nathan, 2014).

Literature discussing climate change identifies specific words such as ‘catastrophic’, ‘rapid’, ‘irreversible’, ‘urgent’, ‘worse than we thought’, ‘chaotic’(Risbey, 2007).

Why Actors Choose to Use Securitization

As an agenda setting tool:

Framing climate related issues as 'climate security' and 'insecurity' helps promote environmental issues such as climate change onto the security agenda (Trombetta, 2008).

Why Agenda Setting Tools Are Important to Politicians

Items pushed to the top of the public agenda are those which are perceived to be of the greatest importance to the public and most likely to be dealt with (Bosk, Hilgartner, 1988; Pralle, 2009).

The agenda has **'carrying capacity'-** only a limited amount of issues can be handled at any given time which creates a competition for a spot (Buzan et al. 1997).

Why Is This an Issue That Needs Further Examination

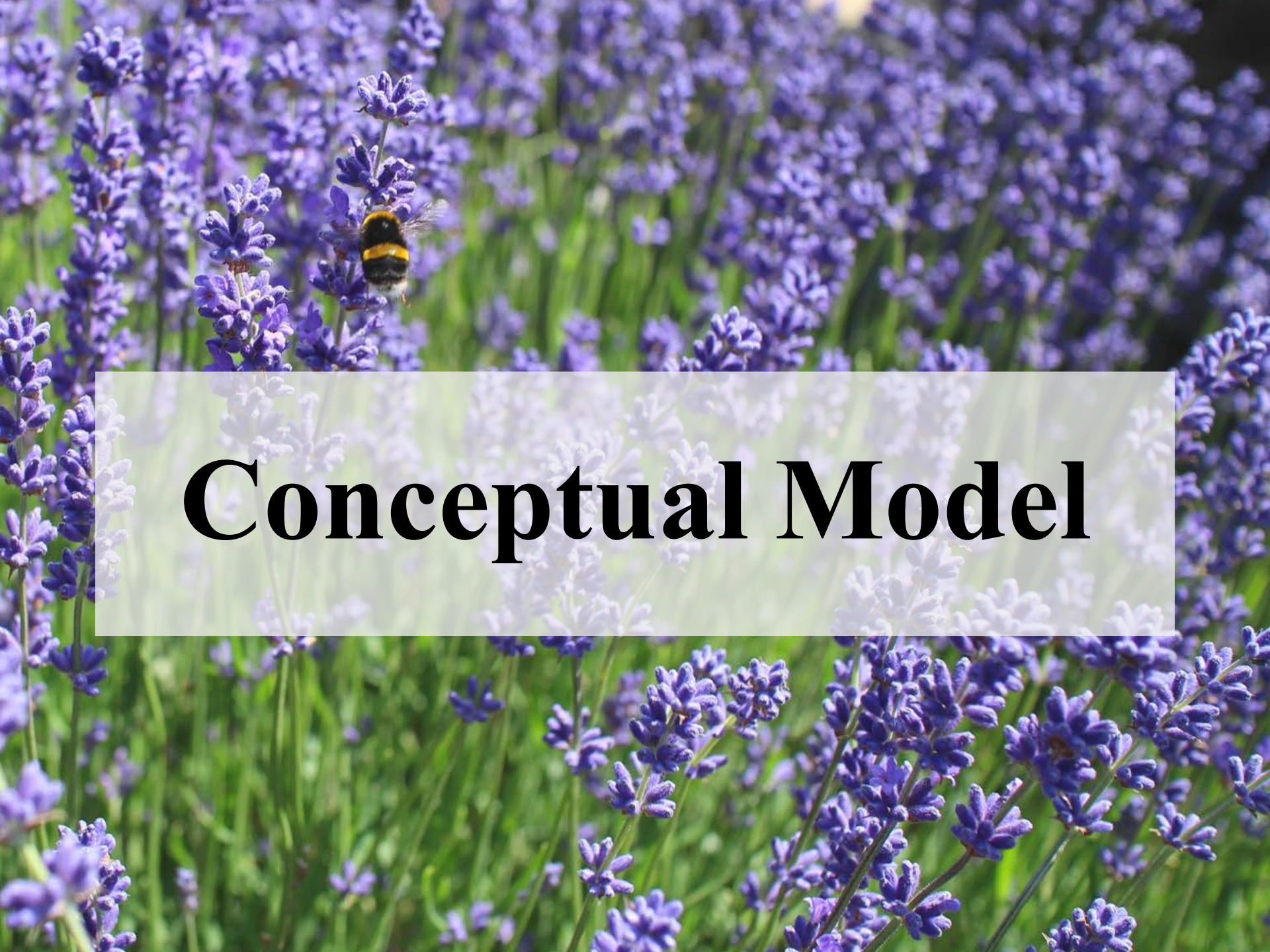
The Problem With Ambiguous Definitions

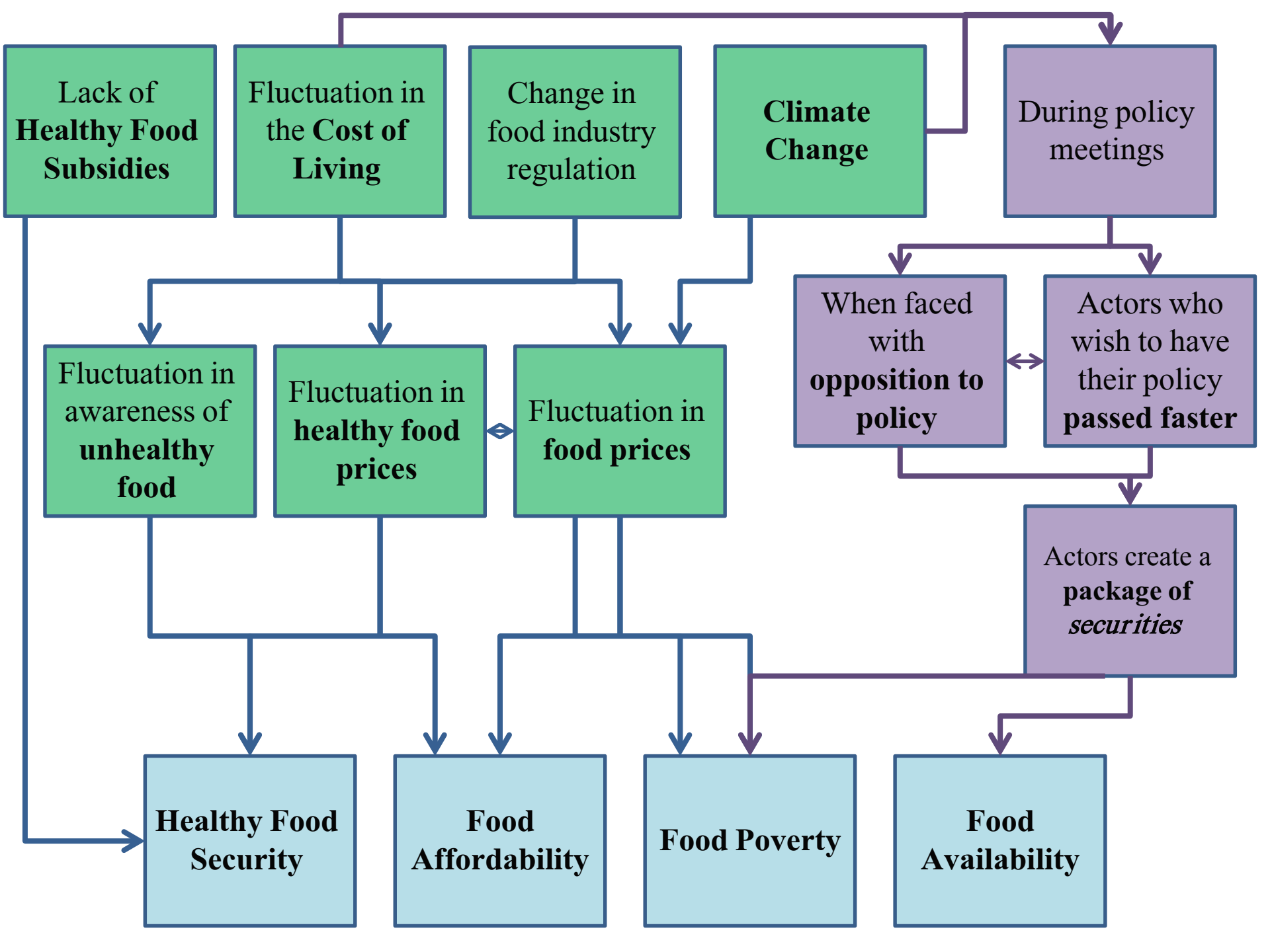
Political actors will often take advantage of an audience's bias towards matters that concern national security in order to promote their own agendas (Buzan et al. 1997; Trombetta, 2008).

The Evolution of the Food Security Frame

Years	What is framed as at risk, & who is under threat	Triggers
1970-1980	**Affordability of food**	1. The high cost of fertilizers 2. Poverty & unemployment 3. Unstable food prices & trade 4. Insufficient food production
	Availability of Food	1. Insufficient food production 2. Lack of information and drought warning systems 3. Low food reserves
1980-1990	**Physical and Financial Access to Food that Maintain Public Health**	1. Poverty & low income 2. Insufficient food production 3. War and political instability 4. Natural disasters 5. Economic instability and financial collapse

1990-2000	**Physical and Financial Access to Nutritious & Safe Food**	1. Poverty & low income 2. Insufficient supply of nutritious food, & seasonal food-supply instability 3. War & political instability 4. Hunger
2000-2007	**Household Food Security**	1. Poverty 2. Market volatility 3. High food prices and cost of living
2007-2016	**Global Warming**	1. Climate change, natural disasters, flooding. & desertification 2. Seasonal food-supply instability 3. Environmental degradation, diseases and pests
	Hunger	1. Decreasing agricultural yield 2. Poverty 3. Volatile markets and high food prices


Conceptual Model


Lack of **Healthy Food Subsidies**
Fluctuation in the **Cost of Living**
Change in food industry regulation
Climate Change
During policy meetings
Fluctuation in awareness of **unhealthy food**
Fluctuation in **healthy food prices**
Fluctuation in **food prices**
When faced with **opposition to policy**
Actors who wish to have their policy **passed faster**
Actors create a **package of *securities***
Healthy Food Security
Food Affordability
Food Poverty
Food Availability

Hypotheses

The paper will examine the following hypotheses:

Type of Actor	Venue	Triggers	Food Security Framing Used
Political Opposition	During Annual Budget Meetings	1. Rise in the cost of living and food prices. 2. Lowered household purchasing power. 3. Threats to cut welfare and / or child benefits.	1. Food Availability. 2. Food Affordability. 3. Food Poverty.

The paper will examine the following hypotheses:

Type of Actor	Venue	Triggers	Food Security Framing Used
Political	Knesset & Committee Meetings	1. Rise in the cost of living and food prices. 2. The population is unable to maintain access to affordable notorious food. 3. Rise in the levels of obesity.	1. Food Affordability. 2. Healthy Food Security.
Political Opposition, NGO's	Knesset & Committee Meetings	1. Lack of healthy food subsidies. 2. Decline in food industry regulation.	1. Healthy Food Security.

The paper will examine the following hypotheses:

Type of Actor	Venue	Triggers	Food Security Framing Used
Political actors facing opposition	Knesset & Committee Meetings	1. Climate change and global warming. 2. Natural disasters. 3. Rise of public demand for something to be done quickly.	1. Environmental insecurity. 2. Food Availability. 3. Food security as part of a package of securities.

Research Methodology

Using the Copenhagen School's Unit for Security Analysis

Which are the **"things that are seen to be existentially threatened"** and have **"a legitimate claim to survival"** (Buzan et al., 1998: 36).

The study will use **discourse analysis** in order to identify linguistic patterns used during policy debates.

The Study will use the following research methodology:

- **For each committee protocol: both explicit and implicit existential language** will be identified through the suggestion of urgency, prioritization, and/or survival.

- **Frames that are centered on threats and risks, for example:** severe hunger or food shortage, national crisis, state of emergency, and dire poverty, will be identified.

The Study will use the following research methodology:

- **The type of *food security* will be identified for each statement**: *household food security/poverty*, or *national food security.*

- **The frames will be categorized according what was under threat:** accessibility, affordability, and availability of healthy food resources.

The Study will use the following research methodology:

- **Each actor** will be categorized according to their **type** (Political, Regulator, NGO) **and discourse coalition.**

- The second stage of the research will measure **the actor's critical responses throughout the debate.**

The Israeli as a *Food Security* Case-Study

What Israel is an Interesting Food Security Lab

In the country's short life span it has already embodied many kinds of food policies.

- When the country was in a state of emergency and war in the 1940's lacked the basic resources to feed its citizens and relied on a food stamp policy (Naor, 1986).

- Today most citizens have financial access to plenty of food resulting in 2.5 million tons of usable food are thrown out each year (Leket, BDO, 2015) and over a 50% obesity rate (Ministry of Health, 2016).

What Israel is an Interesting Food Security Lab

- In Israel there is a bias towards matters of national security on the public agenda, making them a useful agenda setting tool.

- But While the security tag may afford food policy on the regular agenda, it must compete against many other issues when it is put on the security agenda (Sheafer, Weimann, 2005).