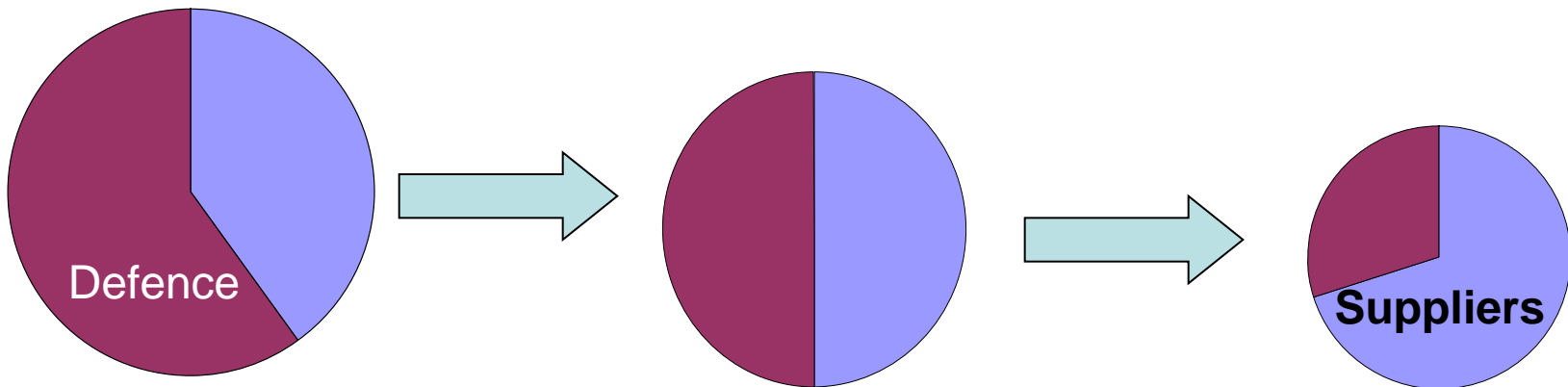


The case to widen Defence Acquisition Research Paradigms

- *Kevin Burgess – Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Defence Acquisition, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Cranfield University.*
- *David Moore – Director Centre for Defence Acquisition, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Cranfield University*

Case to expand research methods

- Neoliberalism
- New Public Management
- Globalisation



Increasing critical interdependencies

- Increasing percentage of the defence budget going to suppliers within the context of an overall decreasing defence budget
- Capability management tends to move activities away from goods and towards services
- Command and control structures (internal) being replaced by contractual arrangements (external)
- Defence is increasingly dependent on suppliers for knowledge creation and leading edge technology (open innovation)

Research agenda has not kept pace with shifts which are so great as to change the nature of how war can be conducted

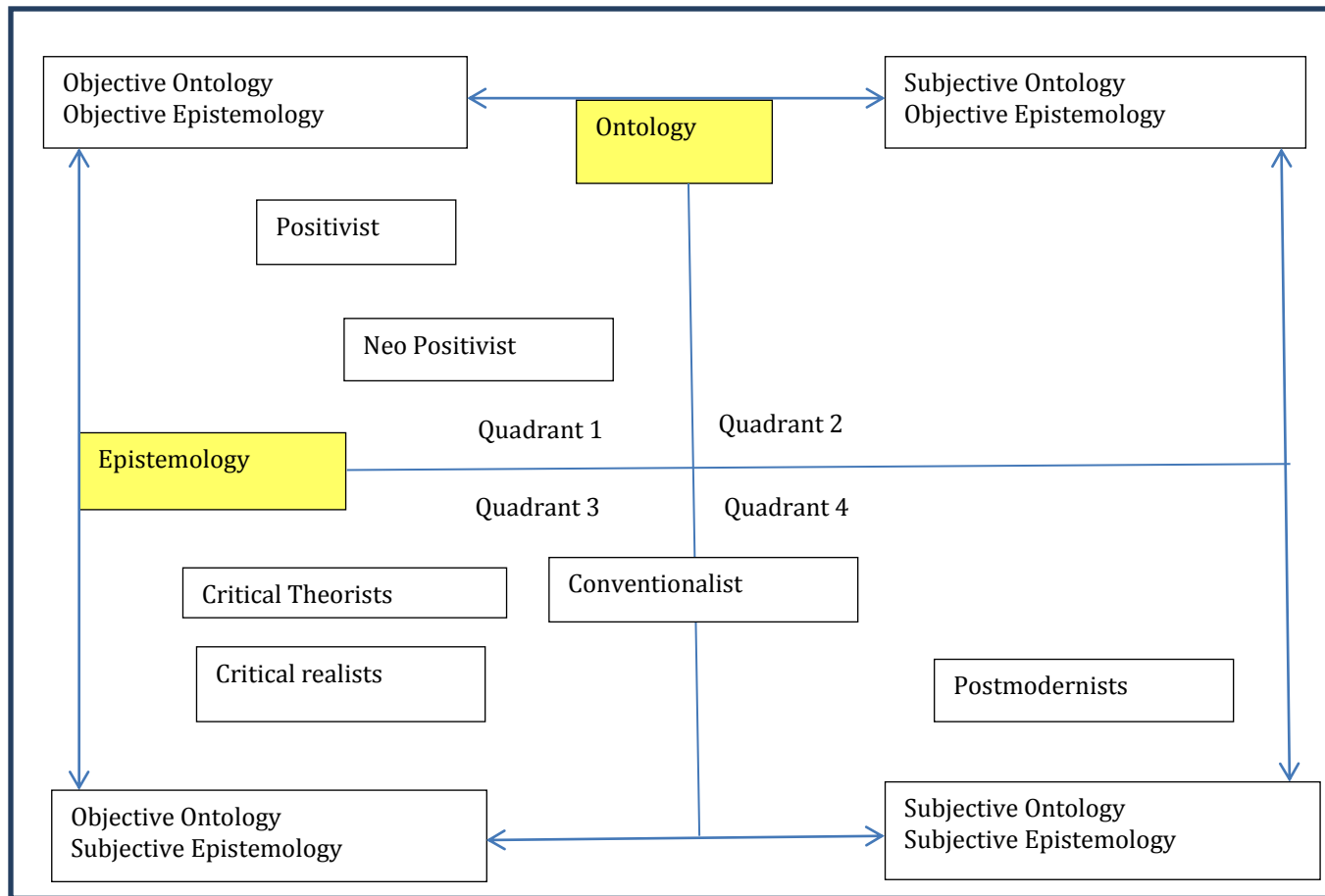
Key issues associated with changes in acquisition practices

Acquisition will become increasingly dependent on social science research in order to meet stakeholder expectations

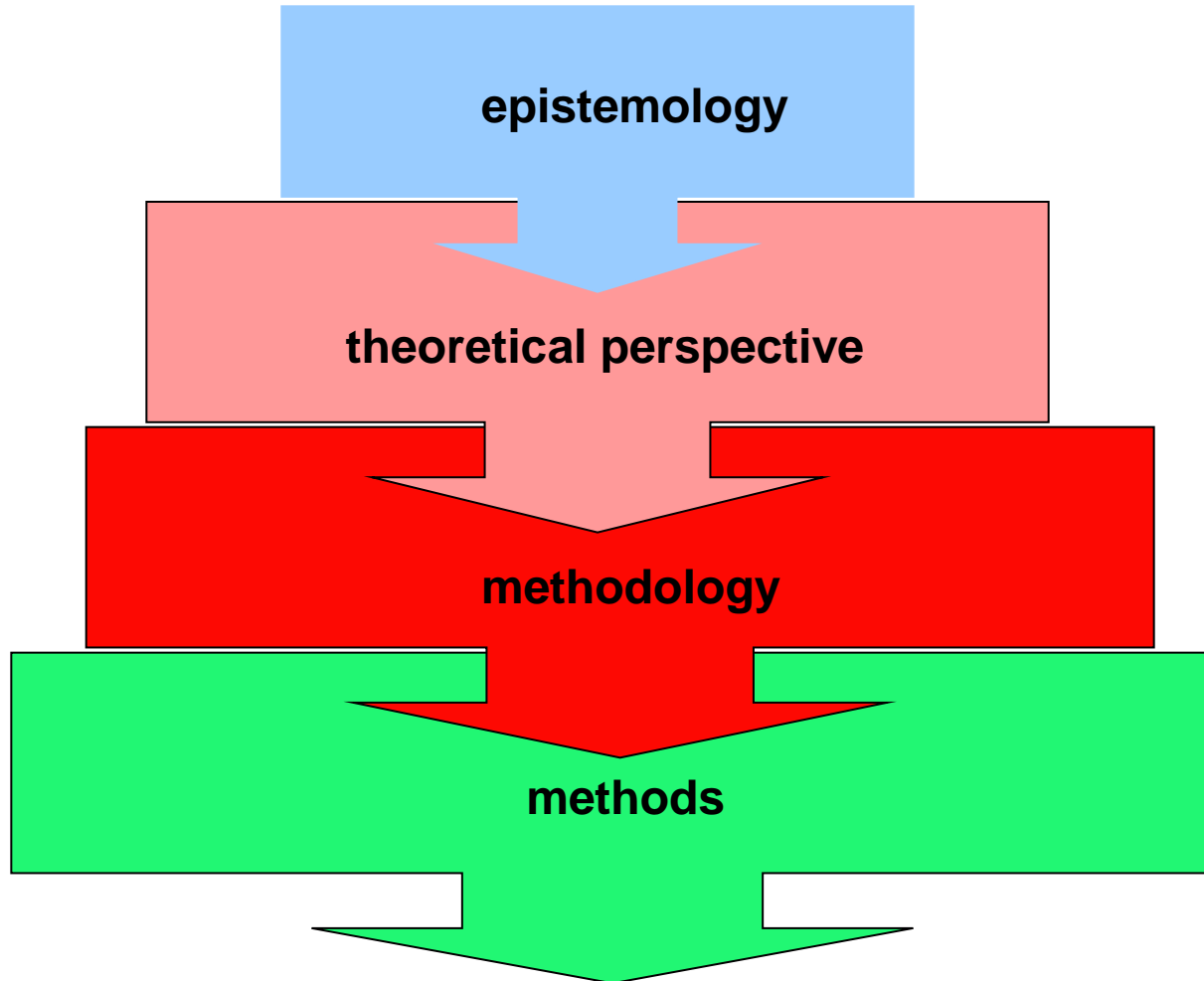
Many of the key enablers for acquisition fall under “soft skills” e.g. trust, cooperation, open innovation, contracting for complex service bundles, etc

Research Methodologies Used – have tended to operate from a single paradigm which is not well equipped to deal with social issues.

Research Paradigms



Basic Elements of Research Process



Source: Crotty, 2004. The Foundations of Social Research

Basic Elements of Research Process

- Epistemology: the theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspectives and thereby in the methodology.
- Theoretical Perspective: The philosophical stance informing the methodology and thus providing a context for the process and grounding its logic and criteria.
- Methodology: the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes
- Methods: the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data related to some research question or hypothesis

A Systems Theory Typology

Participants

Unitary

Pluralists

Coercive

Simple

Simple-Unitary
Hard systems thinking e.g.
 Operations Research,
 inventory, queuing,
 scheduling. Focus optimise
 system in pursuit of known
 goal. Hyper rational,
 mathematical e.g. Lean, ERP,
 Capacity Constraints

Simple-Pluralist
Soft Systems Approaches
 Stresses the importance of
 values, beliefs and
 philosophies –assumes widely
 different views can negotiated
 Examples would include:
 Socio-technical Systems

Simple-Coercive
Emancipatory Systems
Thinking – consensus is
 probably not possible.
 Mainly found in wider
 society analysis e.g. lack
 of recognition for race,
 gender, class, disability,
 and sexual orientation.

Systems

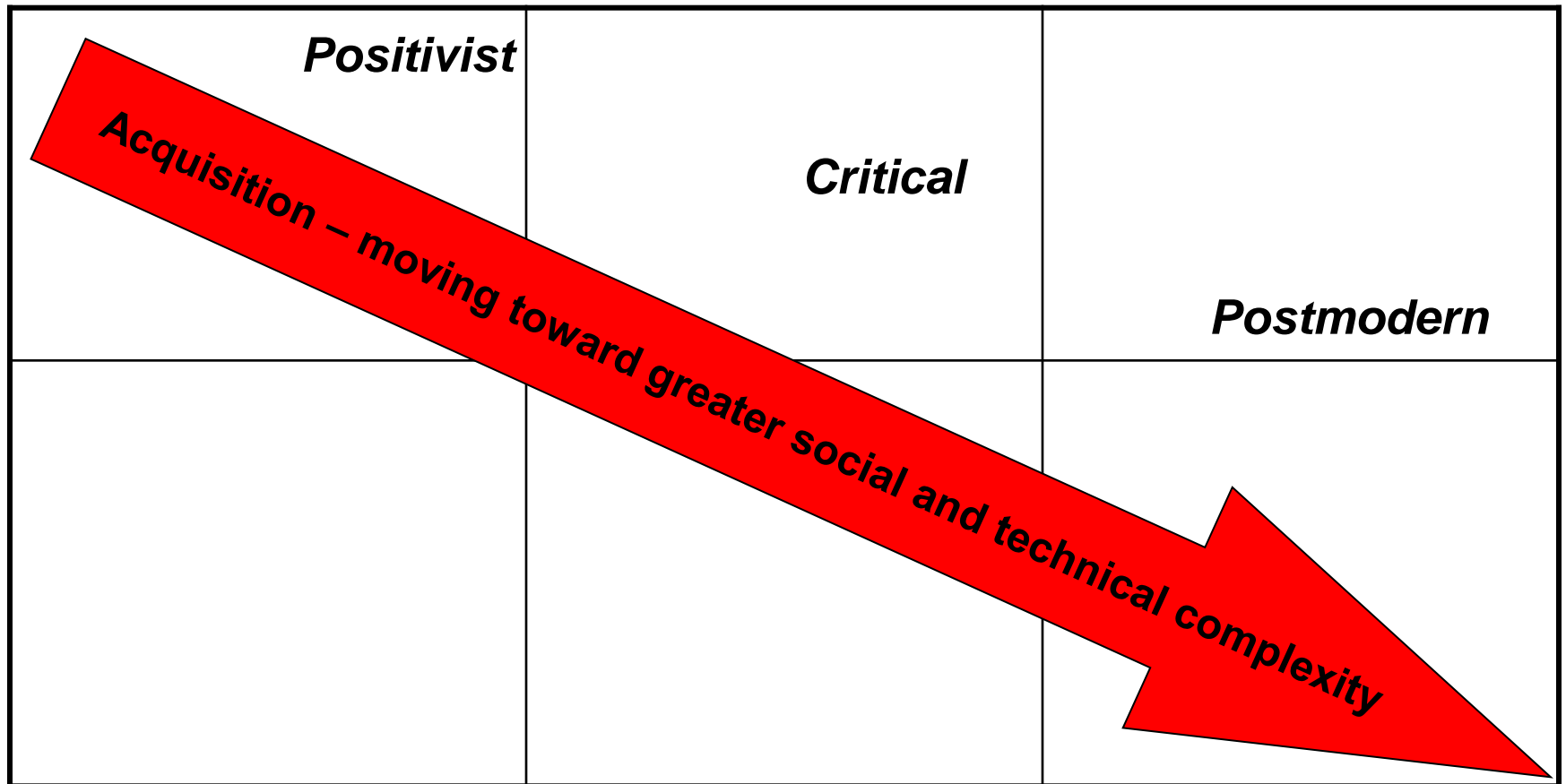
Complex Unitary –
 Systems dynamics
 Organisational Dynamics
 Complexity Theory
 Examples
 •Viable Systems Model
 (Stafford Beer)
 •Learning Organisation
 (Peter Senge)

Complex-Pluralist
Soft Systems Approaches
 As above but more intricate
 Interactive planning –
 (Ackoff)
 Critical Systems Heuristics –
 (Ulrich)

Complex-Coercive
Post-Modern Systems
Thinking
 Anti-systemic in that systems
 have to be challenged and
 broken down – “dominating
 discourse”.
 Bring emotion to the fore –
 does the proposed action
 “feel” right

Complex

Research Challenges for Acquisition



Conclusion

- Acquisition will ultimately be measured by its ability to deliver capability
- The enablers for acquisition, while not ignoring the “hard” systems, will increasingly have to depend upon “soft” systems to generate results
- Generating the understanding needed in the “soft” systems will require a widening of the range of research paradigms and methods used in acquisition