

**Table 4.1: the ‘standard’ sequence of systematic review**

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1. Identifying the review question
  2. Searching for primary studies
  3. Quality appraisal
  4. Extracting the data
  5. Synthesizing the data
  6. Disseminating the findings
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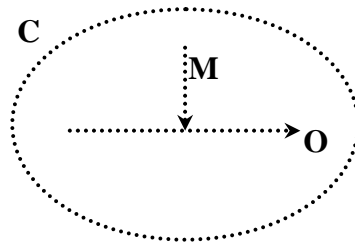
**Table 4.2: An explanatory compendium for complex programmes**

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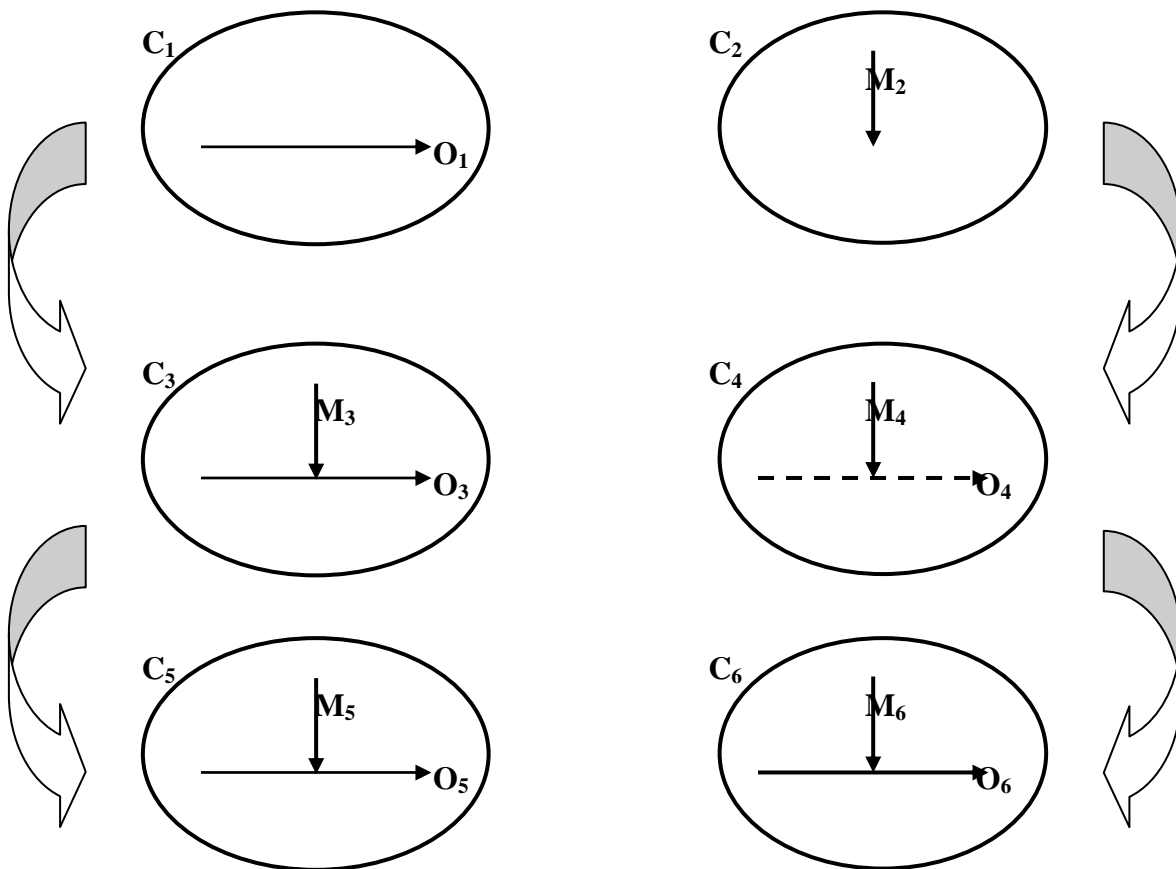
- Programme theories – how is the programme supposed to work?
  - Reasoning and reactions of stakeholders – are there differences in the understanding of the programme theory?
  - Integrity of the implementation chain – is the programme theory applied consistently and cumulatively?
  - Negotiation and feedback in implementation – does the programme theory tend to bend in actual usage?
  - Contextual influences – does the programme theory fare better with particular individuals, interpersonal relations, institutions and infrastructure?
  - History of the programme and relationships with other policies – does the policy apparatus surrounding the theory advance or impede it?
  - Multiple, unintended, long-term effects – is the theory self-affirming or self-defeating or self-neutralizing?
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**Figure 4.1: The logic of realist synthesis**

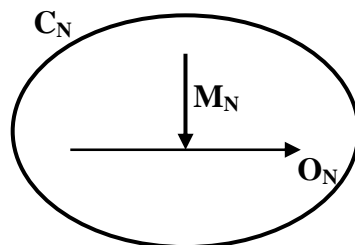
*Initial Programme Theory*



*Primary Studies*

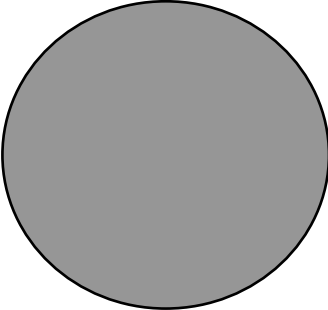


*Revised Theory*

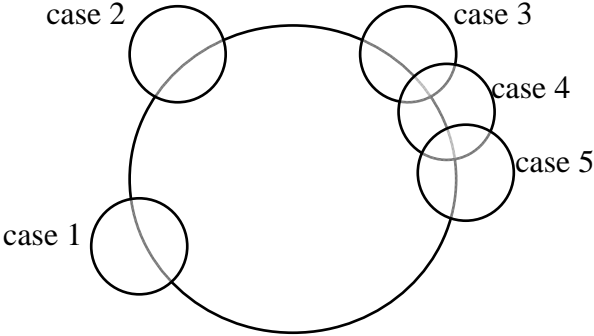


**Figure 4.2: Synthesis as ‘accumulating explanation’**

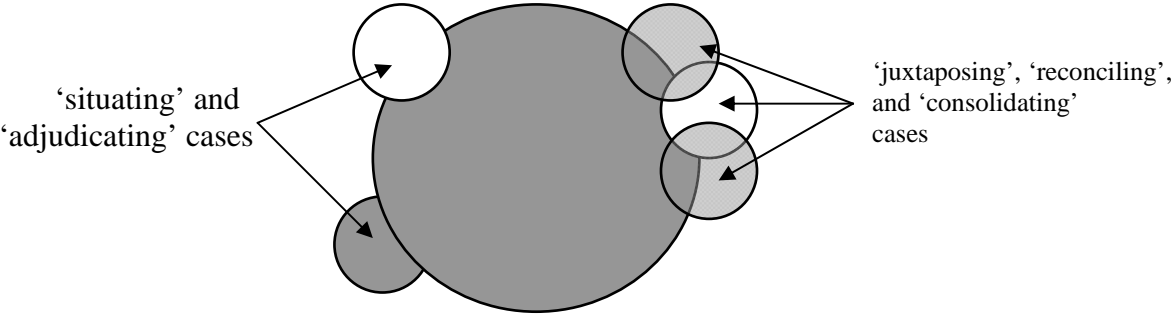
*Initial explanation: the basic model*



*Encounters with primary studies*



*Synthesis: revised explanation*



**Figure 4.3: A task-and-time template for realist synthesis**

	1 Identifying the review question	2 Searching for primary studies	3 Quality appraisal	4 Extracting the data	5 Synthesizing the data	6 Disseminati the finding
	Map key programme theories	Background familiarization search				
	Prioritize key theories for investigation	Search for sources of programme theory		Annotation, note-taking on candidate theories	Prime focus of synthesis selected and formalized	Negotiation with decision- makers on analytic and policy focus
	Formalize model of subset of hypotheses to be tested	Search for empirical studies to test model	Assessment of relevance of primary inquiry to inform model	Collation of materials from selected primary studies		
			Assessment of rigour of primary data to test theory	Detailed reportage of evidence from each case study	Absorbing primary materials into developing synthesis	
		Search for further empirical studies consequent on revisions to model	Further assessment of rigour as each study enters the synthesis	Differential reportage of evidence from each case study	Juxtaposing, adjudicating, reconciling, consolidating and situating further evidence	Consultation on which emerging lines of inquiry should be followed
					Revised model of the complex and inter- related elements of programme theory	Summary theory to initiate process of 'thinking through' future implementation decisions

time

**Figure 5.1: Reviewing the implementation process**

