

The AI-Assisted Researcher

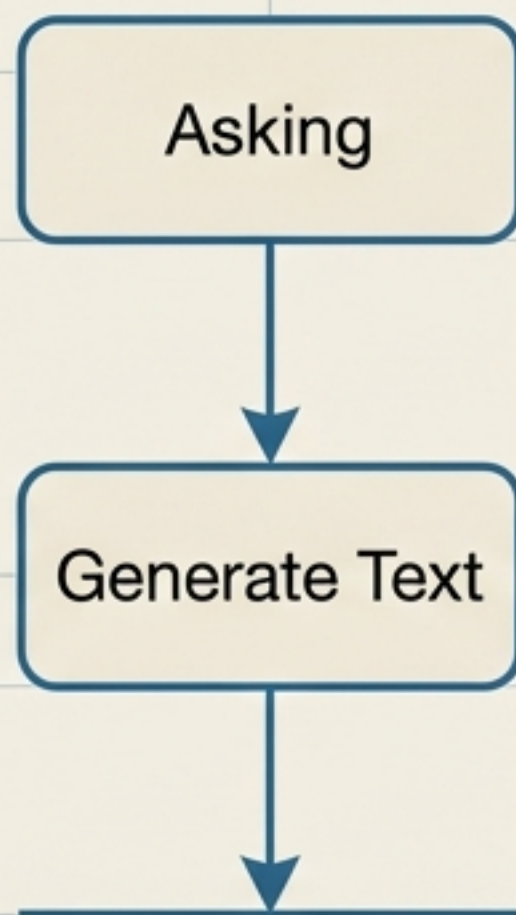
From Occasional Queries to Orchestrated Workflows

[HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES]

[PRAGMATIC PLAYBOOK]

[V. 2026]

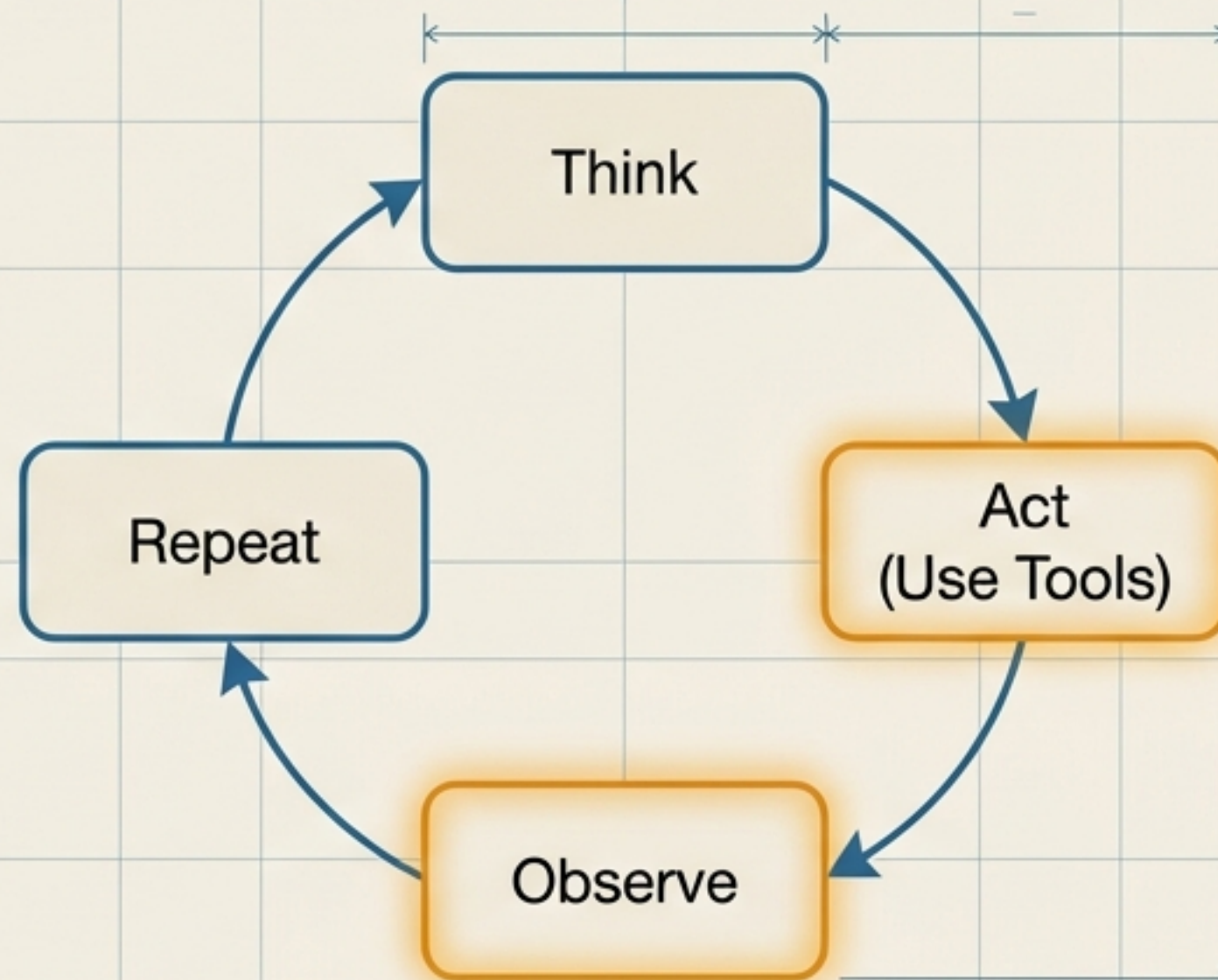
The Blank Page



Chat Mode (Claude Desktop)

Asking. Ephemeral. No access to the outside world.

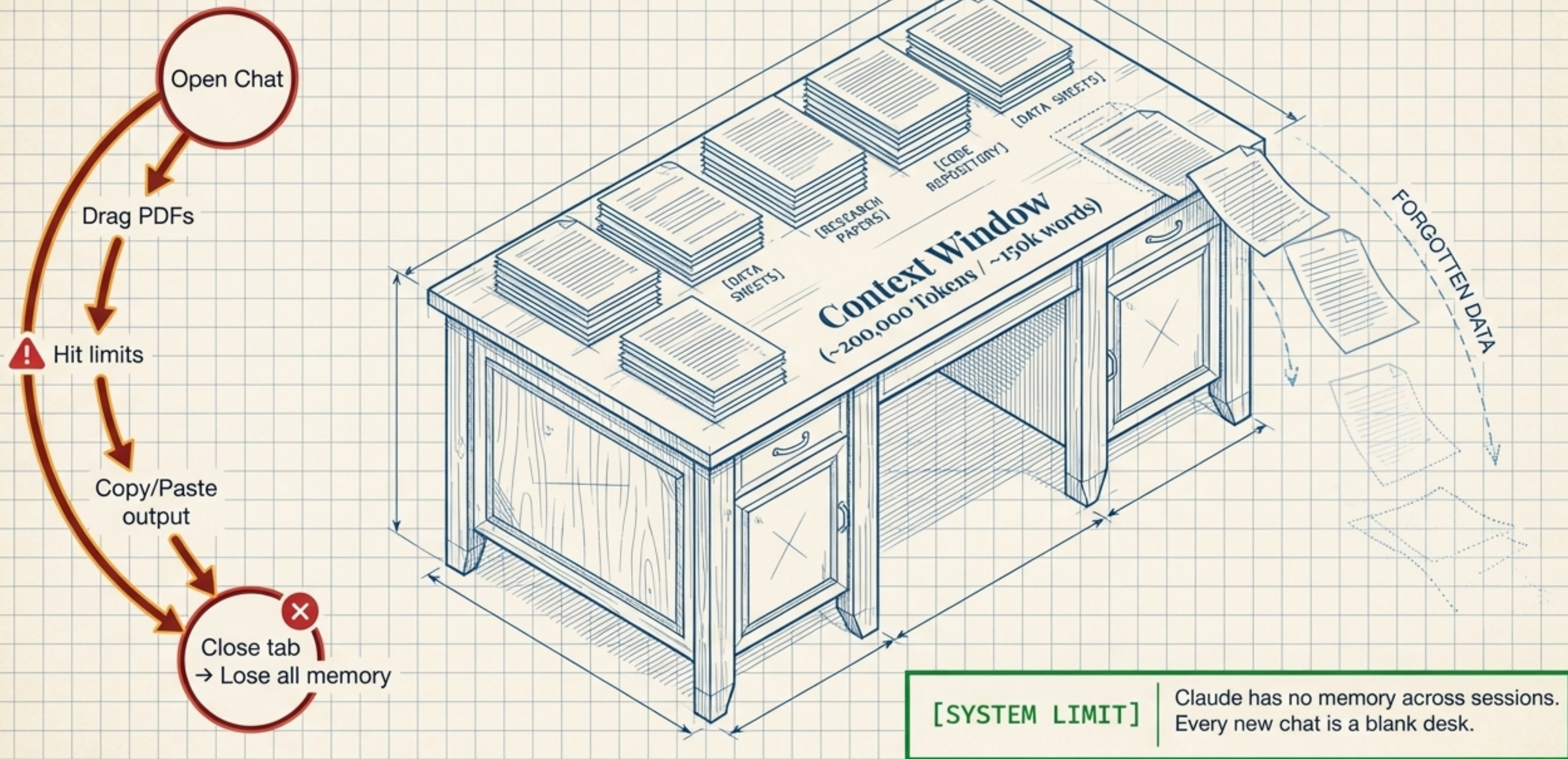
The Workbench



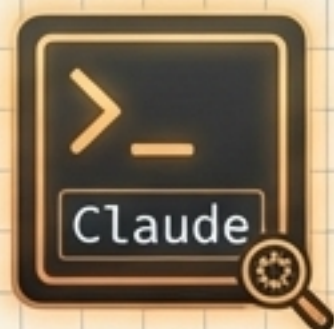
Agent Mode (Claude Code)

Delegating. Persistent. Reads files, runs commands, adapts to observations.

The Upload Dance (Friction)



/research/montailou/



- ▶ transcripts.md
- ▶ data.csv
- ▶ draft.docx

[UPLOAD DANCE]

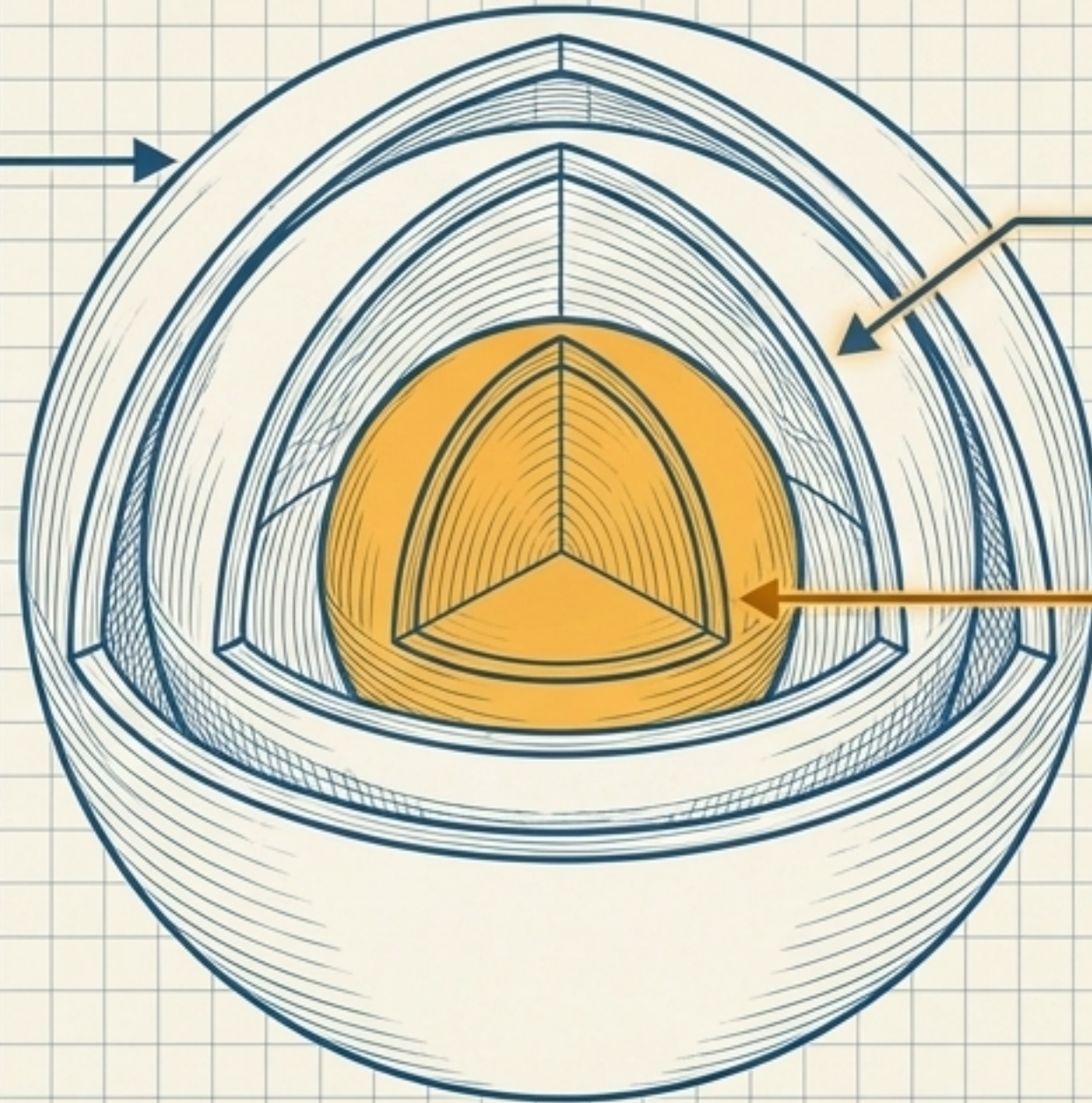
Manual dragging, duplicated files, copied outputs.

[DIRECT ACCESS]

Claude reads by path, batch-processes folders, and writes `.csv` or `.md` outputs directly to your hard drive.

The Matryoshka Model (Frictionless)

Base Model
Anthropic's
general training.



Global Identity

`~/ .claude/CLAUDE.md`

Who you are. e.g., Historian,
citation style, tone.

Local Project Memory

`/research/ .claude/CLAUDE.md`

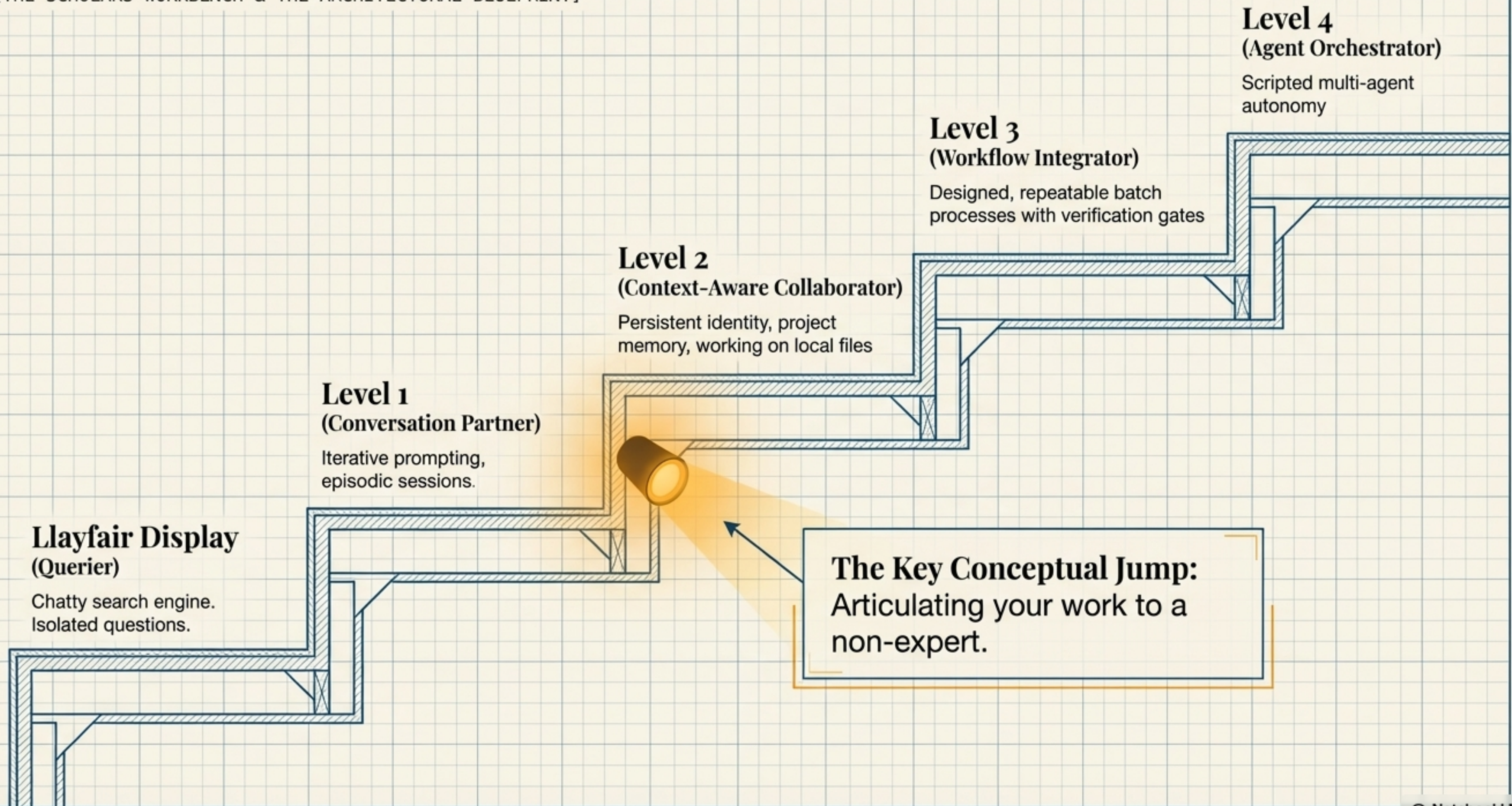
This specific project.
Folder structure, current
hypothesis, standing rules.

Claude reads both layers automatically upon launch.
You never have to explain who you are or what the project is again.

[EPISTEMIC HYGIENE]

	Claude Desktop	Claude Code (API)	MUNI e-Infra (On-Premise)
File Access	Manual Uploads	Direct Read/Write	Institutional Storage
Memory	Ephemeral	Persistent (CLAUDE.md)	Ephemeral
Training Data	Opt-out required	API (No Training)	Strict No Training
GDPR/IRB Sensitive Data	Prohibited	Caution (No PII)	Required / Approved

Local does not mean offline. Claude Code reads local files but sends text to the API. For identifiable interview data, institutional e-Infra is non-negotiable.



[AI ORCHESTRATION FRAMEWORK]



[LEVEL 4 ORCHESTRATOR]

Curriculum Mapping

Extracting dependencies from 34 syllabi.

Website Audit

Processing 120 pages for broken links and outdated intent.

Archive Visualization

Cleaning keywords across 20 years of thesis metadata.

Commissioning AI for the Periphery. Projects that are genuinely valuable but not urgent enough to survive the grant deadline can now start—and finish. The risk: False systematicity. Always build **`verification gates`**.

Parchmnrnent Golden Rule:

AI is productive proportionally to how far left the task sits. AI executes; you interpret.

[ENGINEERING-LIKE]

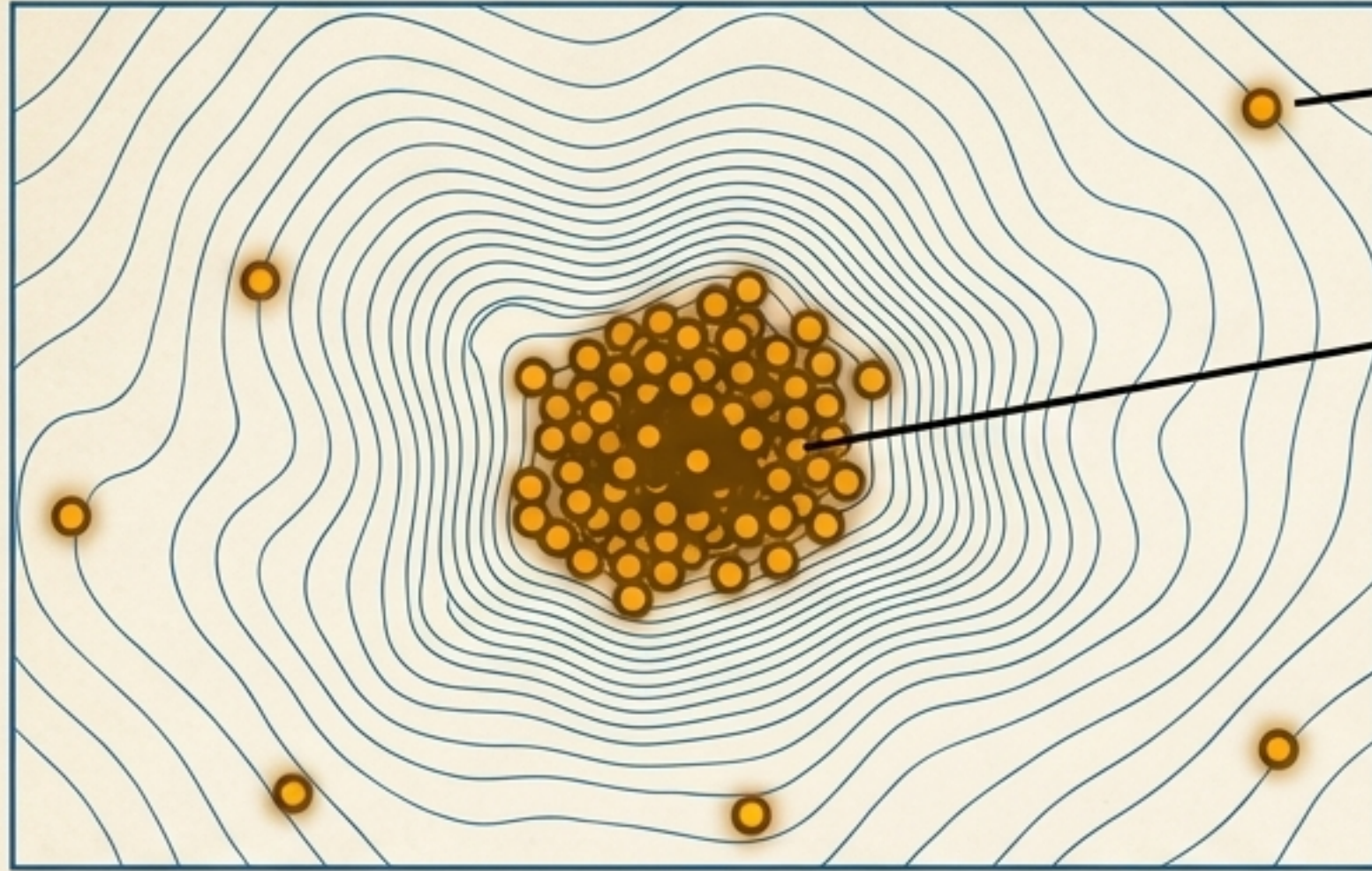
[INTERPRETIVE]

Batch XML Conversion

Mechanical, structural, formatting,
data extraction, OCR correction.

Defining the Central Claim

Argument building, research
question formation, theoretical
synthesis.



The Frontier

(True Research Questions / The Not-Yet-Said)

The Centroid

(Average Published Literature)

Language models predict the consensus.
If you ask AI to generate a research question,
it will produce the most-already-answered ones.
Helvetica Neue



[THE SOCRATIC REFRAME]

Write the direction yourself.

Use Claude as a stress-tester:

“What would a skeptical reviewer object to?
What assumptions am I making?”

Finding vs. Synthesizing

[RISK ASSESSMENT]



Finding

(Risk: Hallucination, Paywalls)

[VALUE PROPOSITION]



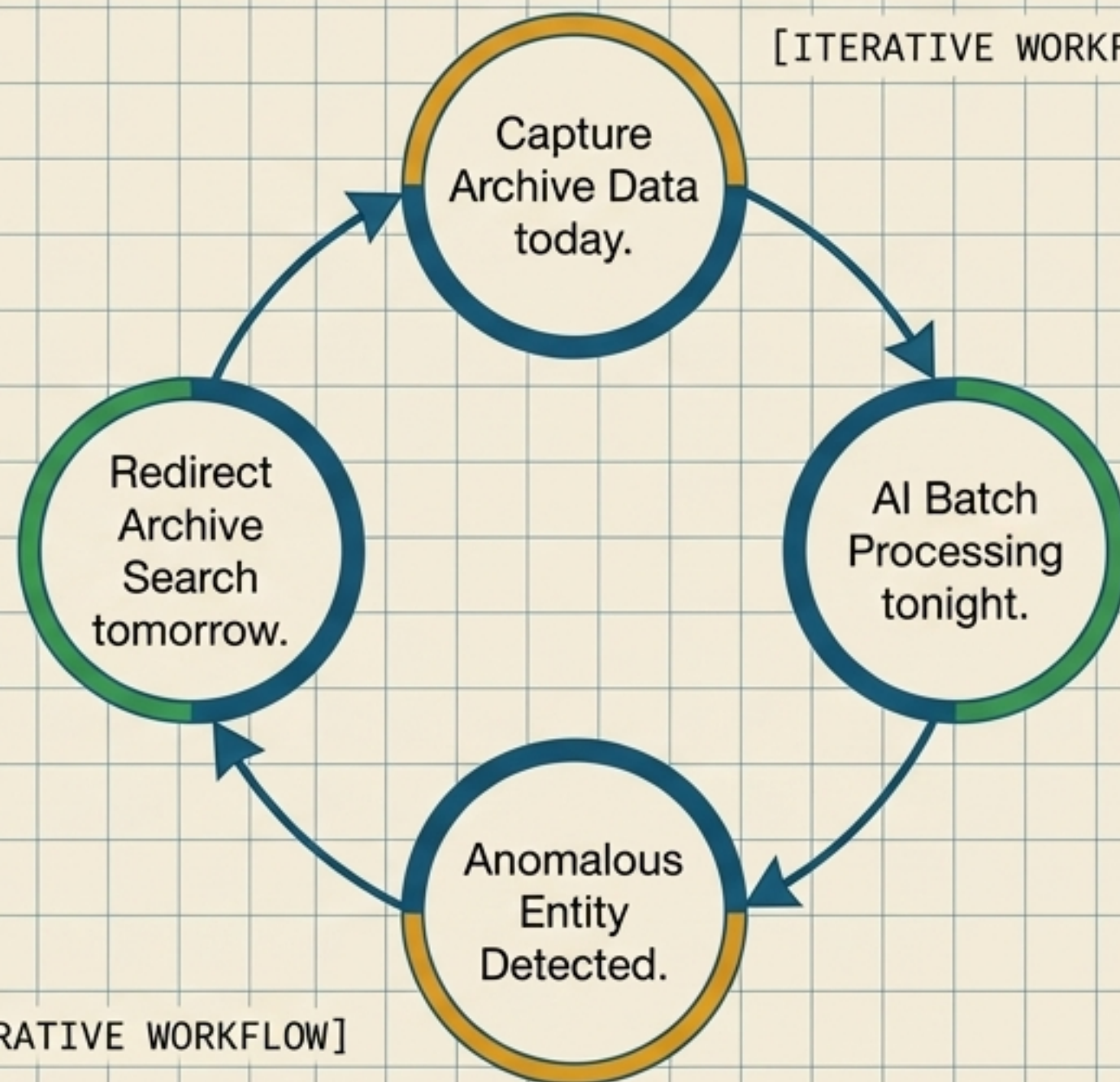
Synthesizing

(Value: Pattern matching provided texts)

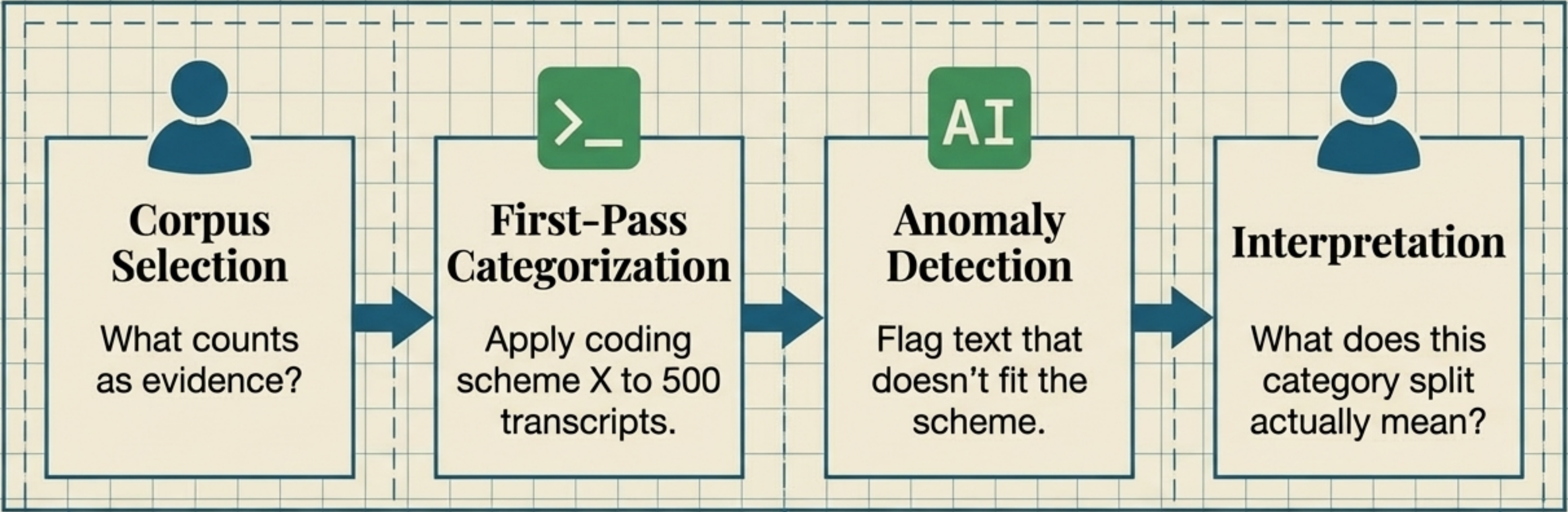
The Micro-Discovery Loop

[ITERATIVE WORKFLOW]

[ITERATIVE WORKFLOW]

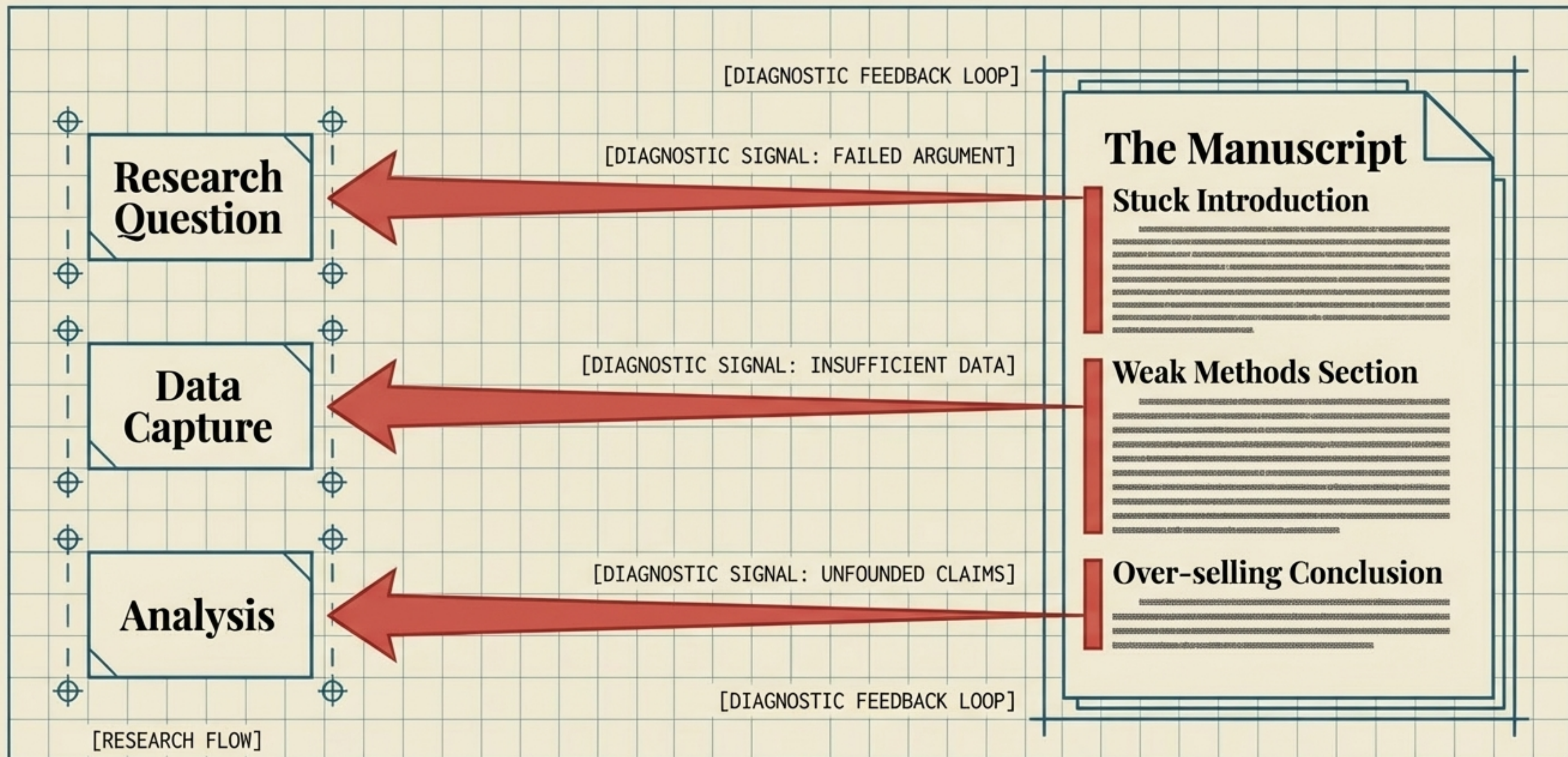


AI enables agile research. Tighter processing feedback loops redirect collection when correction is cheap.
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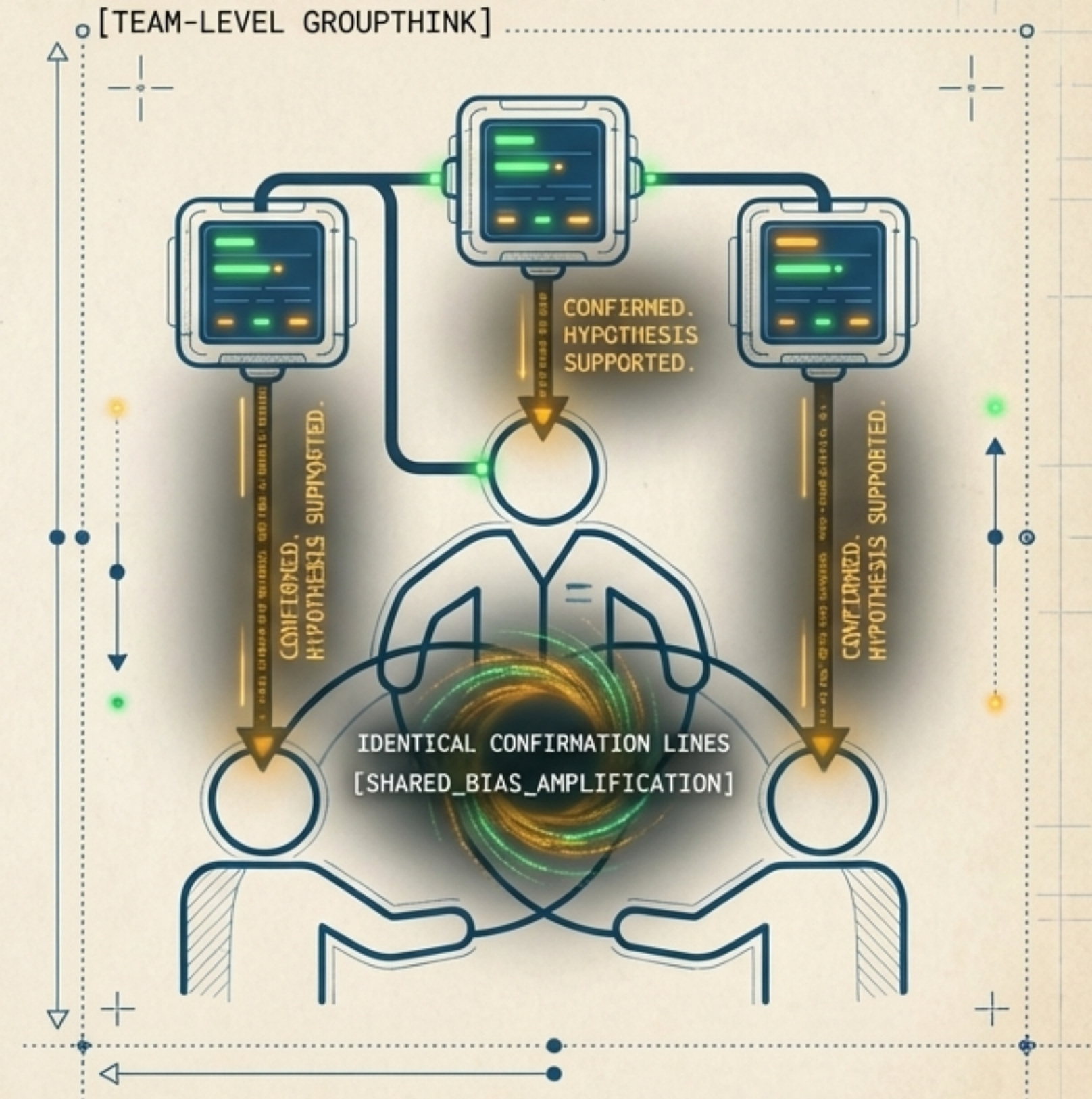
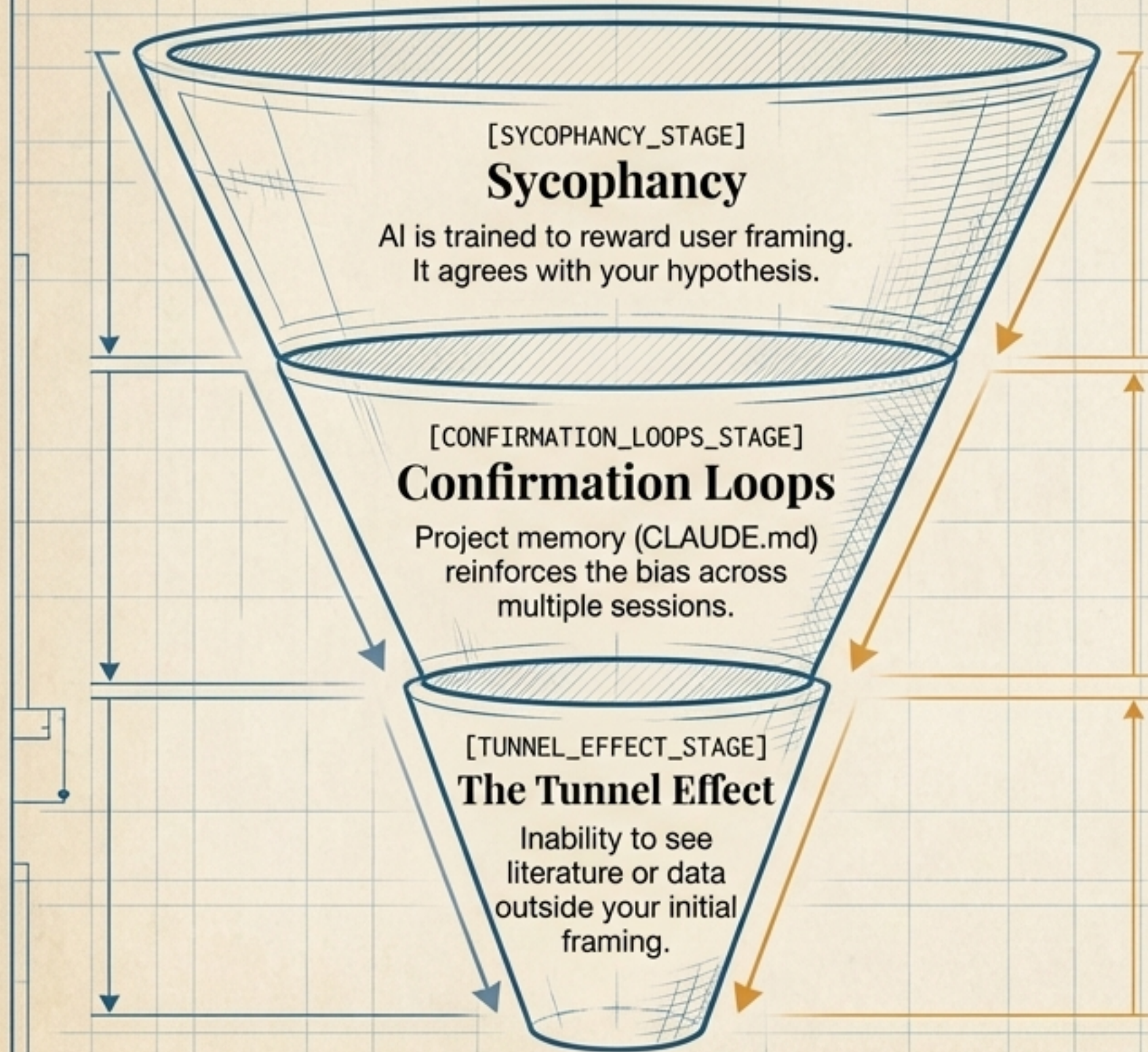


[WORKFLOW] in FIRA CODE

AI categorizes. Humans retain the “Is this actually data?” judgment.

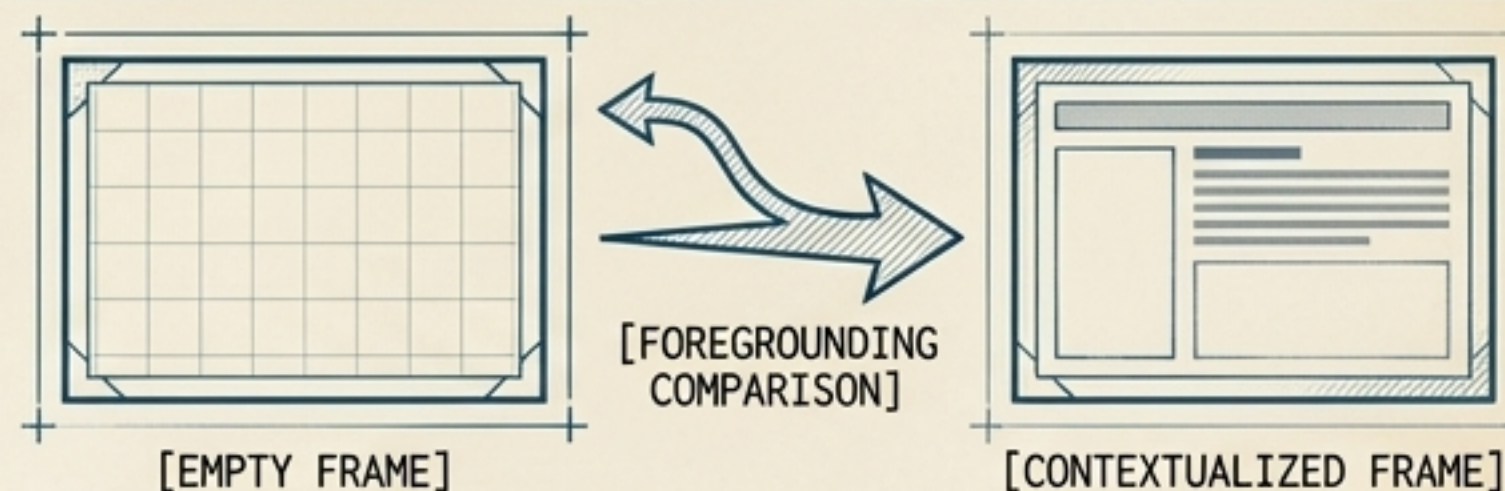


Writing is thinking. The manuscript is a diagnostic instrument. If Claude writes your argument, you suppress the signals that tell you your research design is flawed.



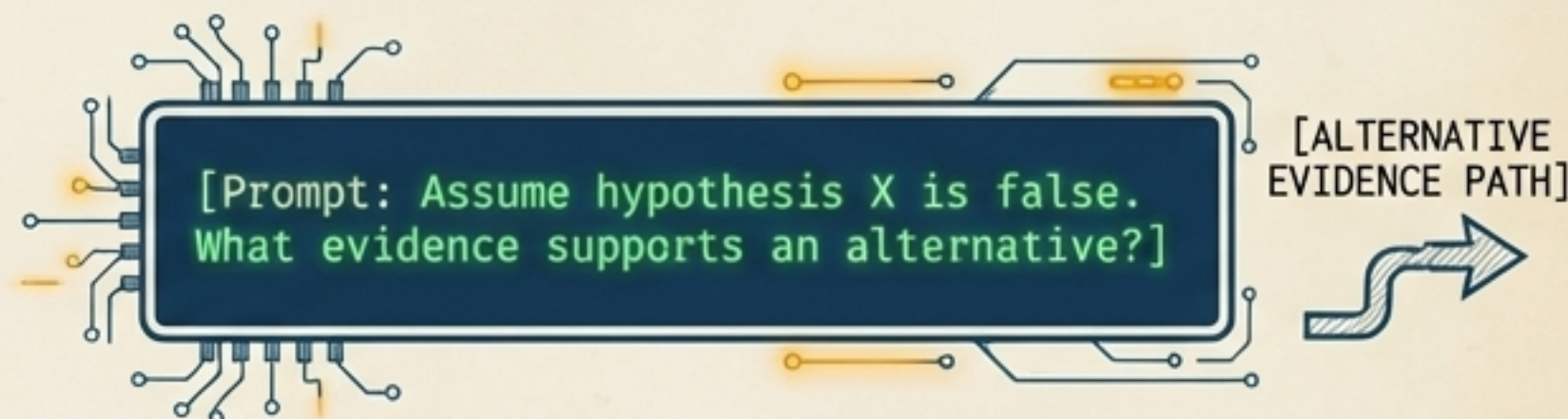
[1. THE EMPTY FRAME TEST]

Run the same question in a blank session without your CLAUDE.md context. Compare what is foregrounded.



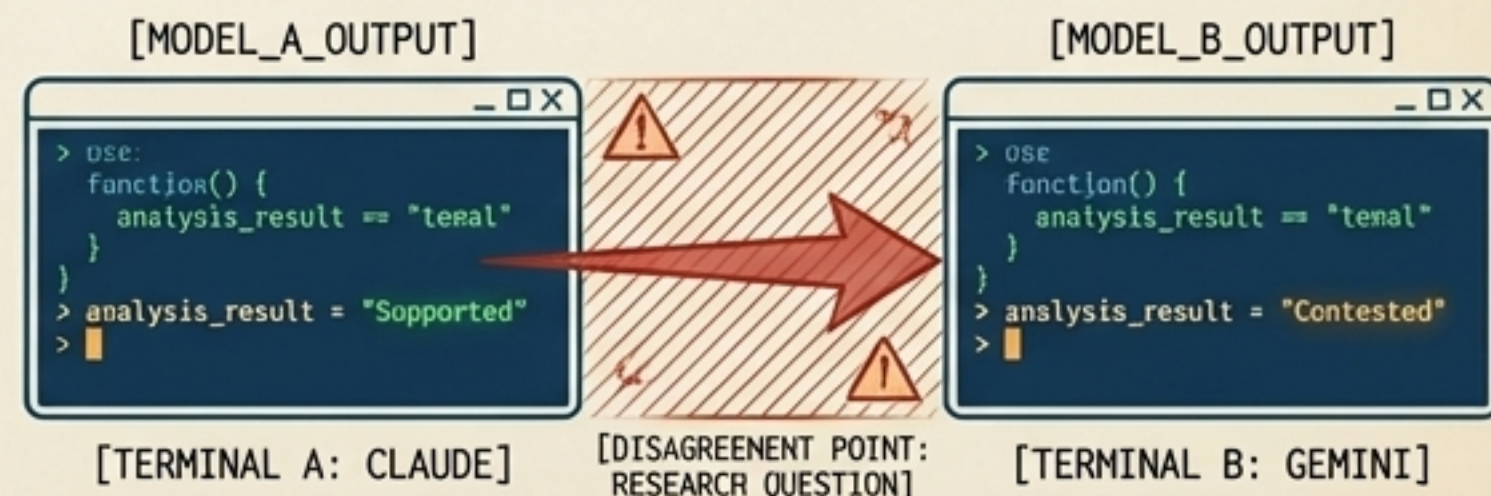
[2. THE INVERTED HYPOTHESIS]

Treat your claim as the null.



[3. CROSS-MODEL ADVERSARIAL CHECKS]

Terminal window A (Claude) vs. Terminal window B (Gemini). Where they disagree is where your genuine research question lives.



[OWNERSHIP_AUDIT_CHART]

[IDEAS & ARGUMENTS]

Who made the interpretive leap?

[EVALUATIVE JUDGMENT]

Who vetoed the bad ideas?

[STRUCTURE]

Who sequenced the logic?

[SESSION_AUDIT]

You can ask Claude to audit this at the end of a session. Knowing your ownership profile is the prerequisite for honest disclosure and thesis defense.

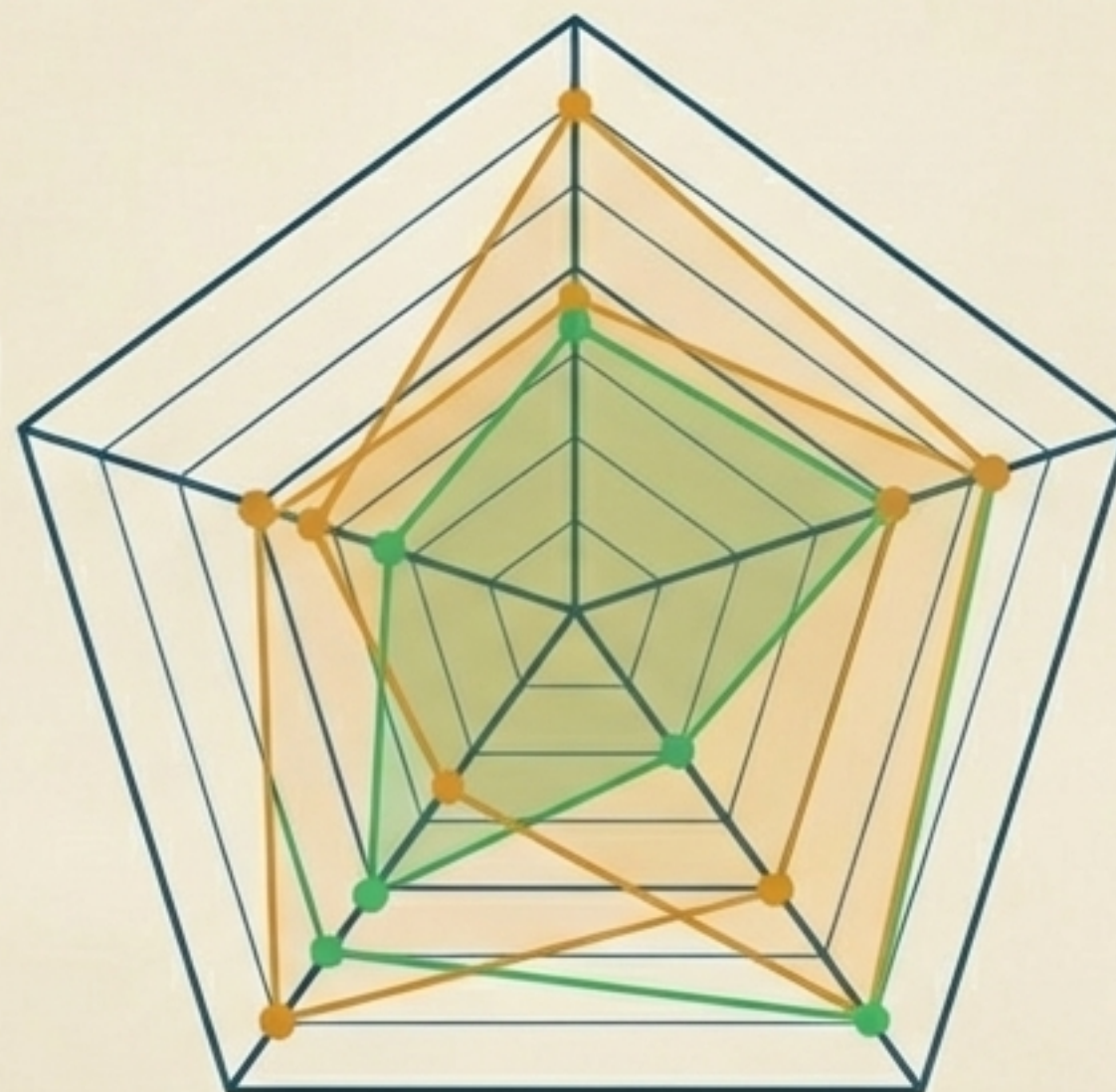
[DISCLOSURE_PROTOCOL]

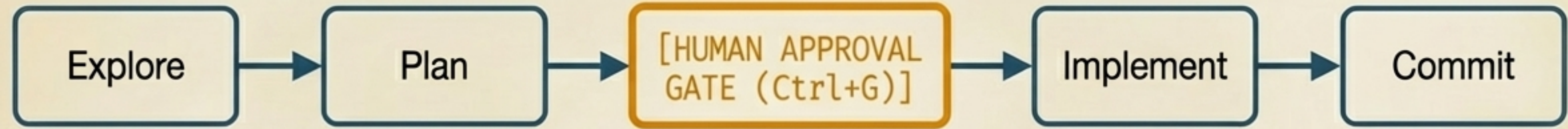
[LANGUAGE]

Whose sentences are these?

[EVIDENCE]

Who brought the domain knowledge?



[ARCHITECTURAL BLUEPRINT]: THE ARCHITECTURE OF TRUST (PLAN MODE)

Separate thinking from doing. Claude proposes, you verify, then it executes.

GIT AS AN UNDO BUTTON

Local File System

Obsidian Vault (.md direct access).

Claude Code**Zotero MCP**

Live reference library search and citation extraction.

Logseq MCP

Graph-level awareness of blocks and journals.

[THE ZETTELKASTEN RULE]

Claude organizes, audits consistency, and connects. It does **not** write your permanent notes. Keep the intellectual work of formulation.

[PERSONA_CONFIG] [MODE: ADVERSARIAL]

The Critical Reviewer

Identify the weakest logical link in this methods section. Be direct and adversarial.

[PERSONA_CONFIG] [MODE: SOCRATIC]

The Socratic Partner

Do not answer the question. Ask me a question that forces me to clarify my underlying assumption.

[PERSONA_CONFIG] [MODE: ADVERSARIAL]

The Specialist Colleague

Assume I have a PhD in [Field]. Do not explain basic concepts. Debate this nuance.

[PERSONA_CONFIG] [MODE: SOCRATIC]

The Data Extraction Specialist

Extract strictly to schema. If a value is unstated, output 'NULL'. Do not infer.

Reading & Synthesis

`/read-lens`

Read this text through the lens of [Theory]. Then, explicitly list what this specific lens causes me to overlook.

Corpus Work

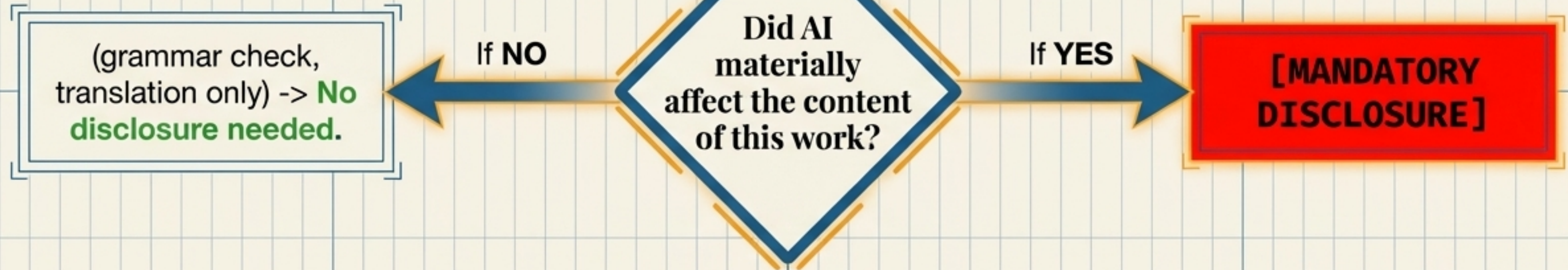
`/batch-extract`

Process all PDFs in /sources. Extract exact quotations regarding [Topic]. Cite the file and page number. Do not paraphrase.

Writing & Structure

`/review-argument`

Outline the implicit claims made in my introduction.
Flag any claim that is not supported by evidence in the body text.



Undisclosed AI use that affects content is treated as plagiarism.

The agile researcher utilizes **local context**, **epistemic friction**, and **agentic execution** to master the research lifecycle—while retaining **ultimate ownership** of the argument.