

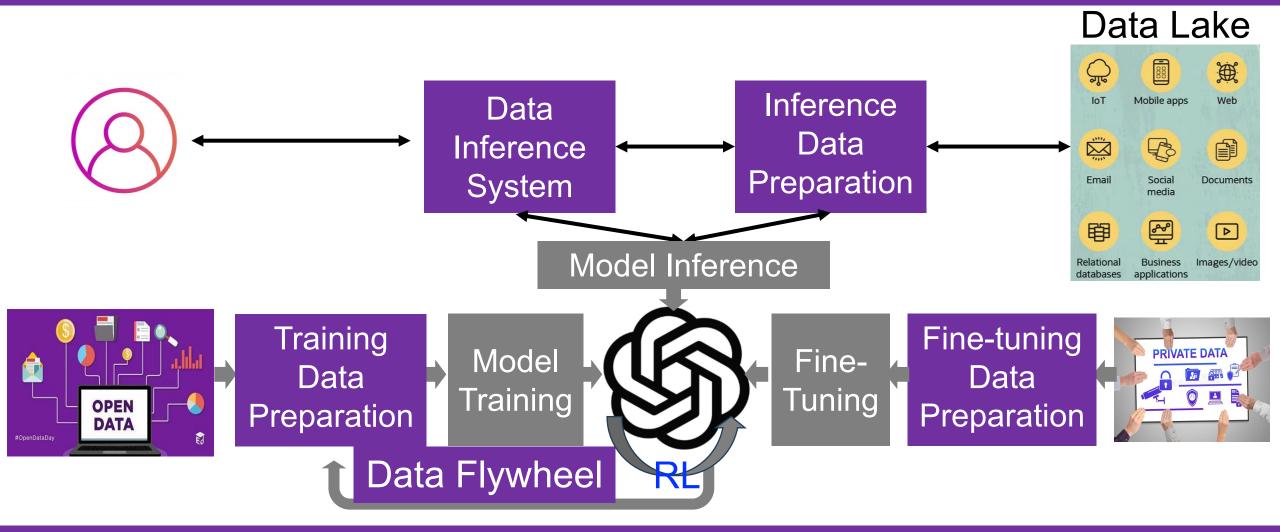
41st IEEE International Conference on Data Engineering

DatA Agent: A Holistic Architecture for Orchestrating Data+Al Ecosystems

Guoliang Li

Department of Computer Science, Tsinghua University

Data+Al Lifecycle

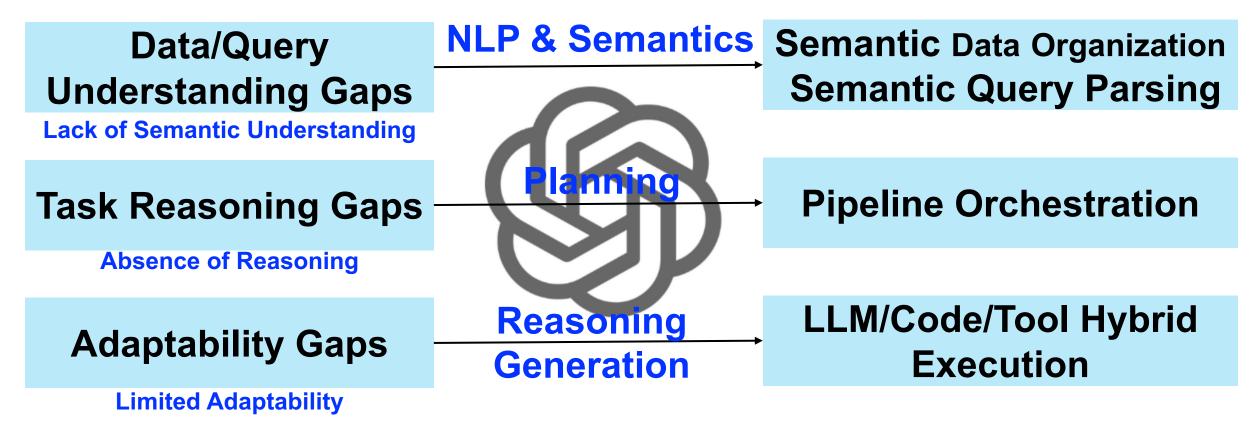


Rely on labor-intensive coding, hard for Adaptability ⊗ Manual Intervention → Autonomy

Data + AI Motivation

How to Bridge the Gaps?





An autonomous system is crucial for Data+AI applications.

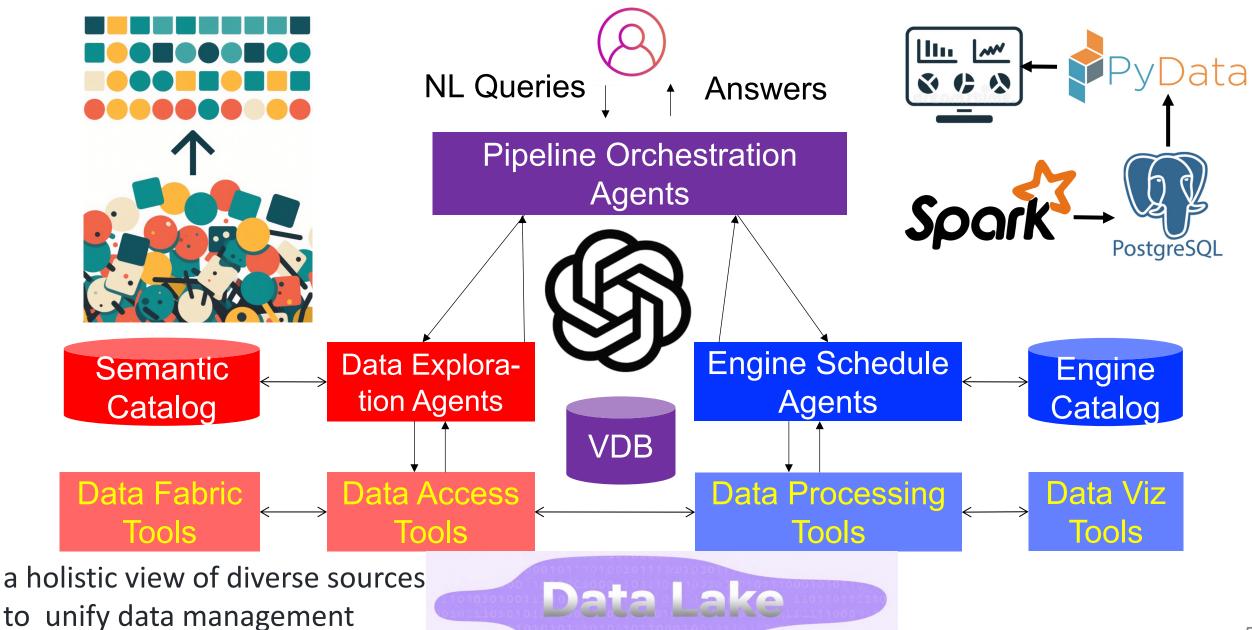
Data Agent

Data Agent: Autonomously performs data-related tasks with capabilities for knowledge comprehension, automatic planning, and self-reflection.

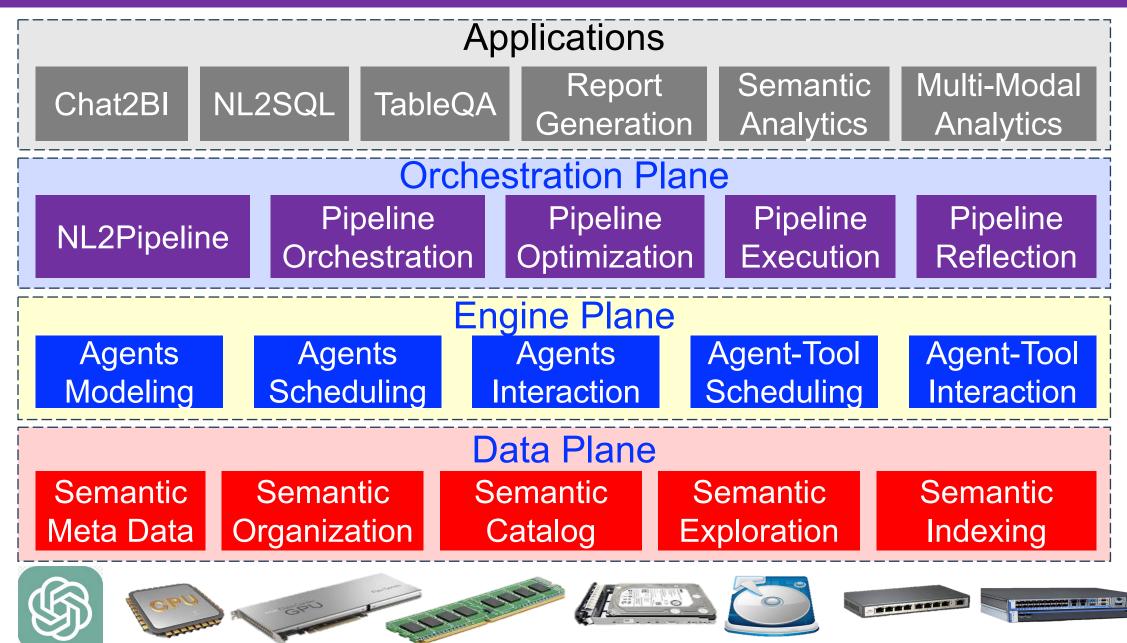
- Data Analytics Agent
 - Unstructured Data Agent
 - Semantic Structured Data Agent
 - Data Lake Agent
 - Multi-Modal Data Agent
- Data Science Agent
- DBA Agent
- Database Development Agent



Data Agent: Framework



Data Agent: Architecture



Data Agent: Challenges

Challenge ①: How to understand queries, data, agents, tools?

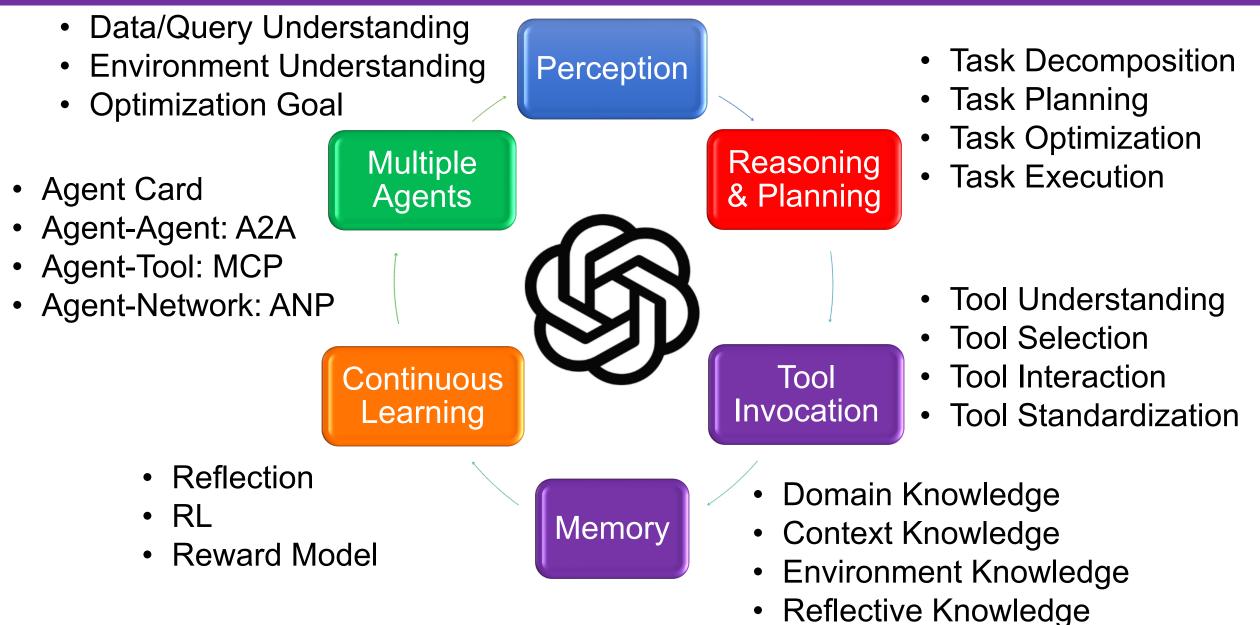
Challenge 2: How to orchestrate an effective and efficient pipeline?

Challenge ③: How to schedule and interact agents and tools?

Challenge ④: How to optimize/execute a pipeline?

Challenge (5): How to continuously enhance the pipeline quality?

Data Agent: Challenges

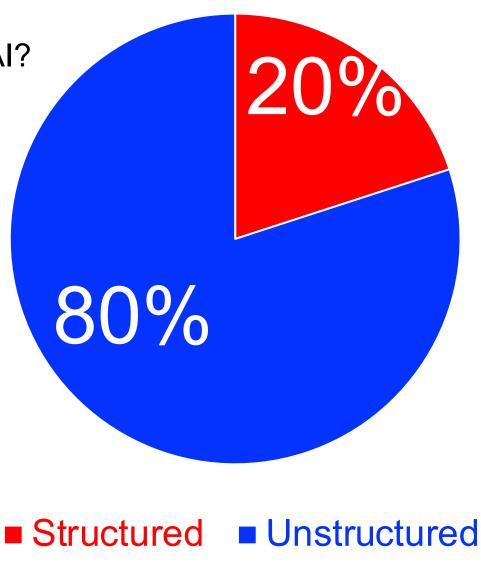




Data Agent for Unstructured Data Analytics

Motivation of Unstructured Data Analytics

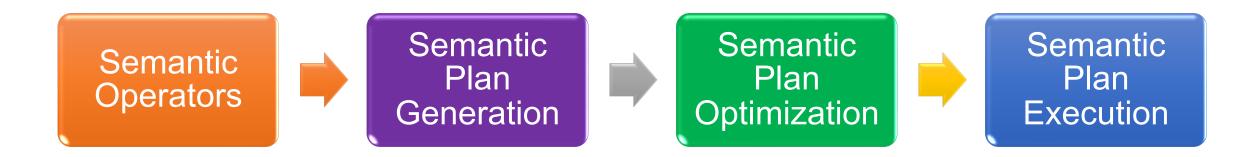
- Hard to Analyze Unstructured Data!
 - How many ICDE25 papers are related to Data+AI?
 - Which conferences have the highest number of Data+AI papers?
- Challenges
 - Query Understanding
 - Unstructured Data Filtering (Operators)
 - Unstructured Data Aggregation (Operators)
- Autonomous Unstructured Data Analytics
 Pipeline Orchestration & Optimization



Multi-hop Query Example

List the highest-rated movies directed by Steven Spielberg before he turned 40.

- **Step 1. Semantic Extract** the year of Steven Spielberg' 40 years old
- Step 2. Semantic Filter the movies before this year
- Step 3. Semantic Rank the movies by the ratings

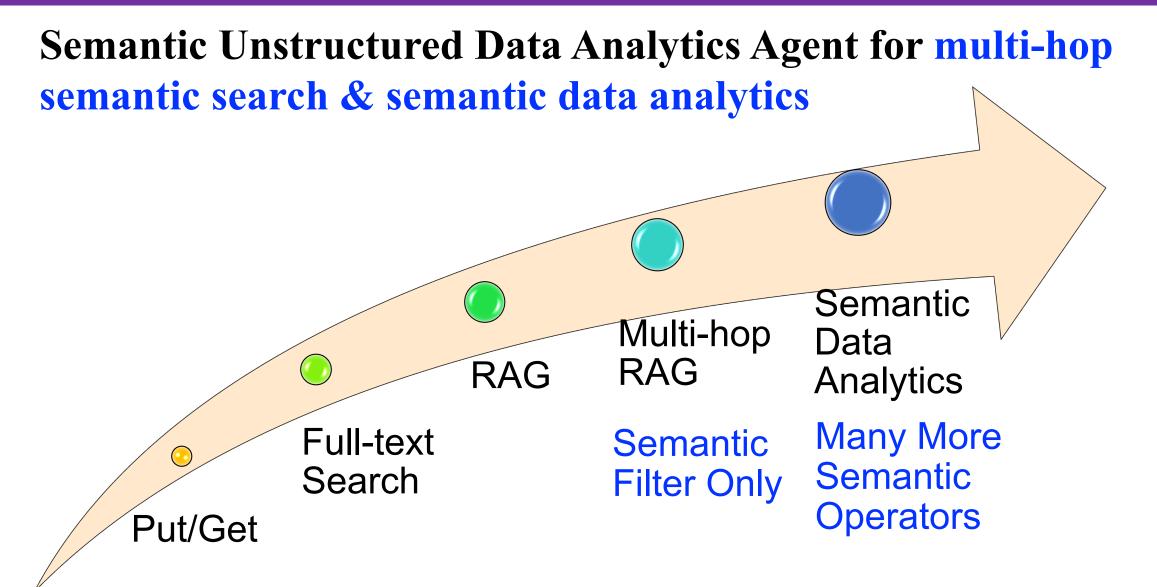


Semantic Data Analytics Example

Count the number of movies directed by Steven Spielberg that the number of positive reports is larger than the number of negative ones by their report sentiments.

- Step 1. Semantic Extract movies directed by Steven Spielberg
- Step 2. Semantic Filter the reports for the extracted movies
- Step 3. Semantic Group the reports by filtered movies
- Step 4. Semantic Classify the reports as Negative or Positive
- Step 5. **Count** the Positive reports and Negative reports for each group
- Step 6. **Compare** #Positive reports and #Negative reports
- Step 7. **Count** the number of groups with more #Positive reports

Unstructured Data Analytics Agent



Jiayi Wang, Guoliang Li. AOP: Automated and Interactive LLM Pipeline Orchestration for Answering Complex Queries. CIDR 2025

Unstructured Data Analytics Agent: NL2Pipeline

NL Query

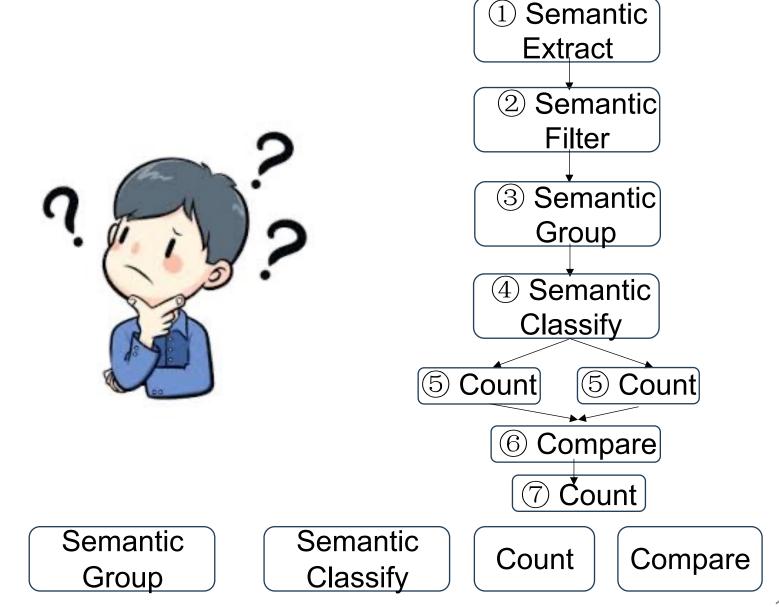
Count the number of movies directed by Steven Spielberg that the number of positive reports is larger than the number of negative ones by their report sentiments.

Semantic

Filter

Semantic

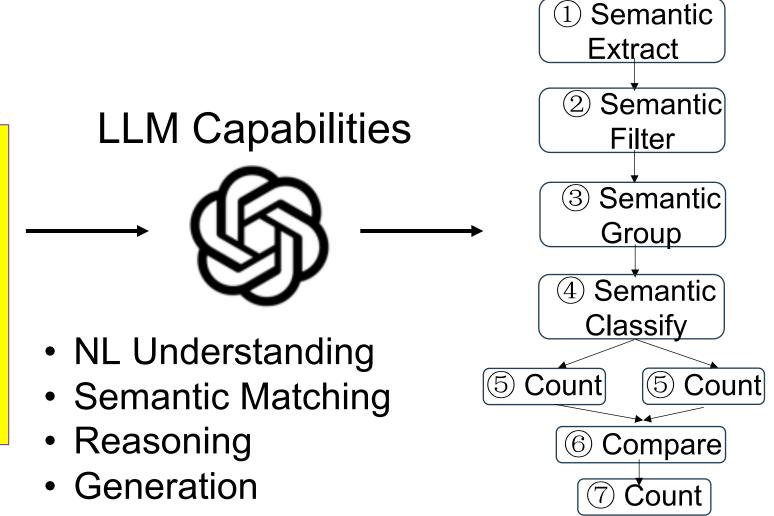
Extract



Unstructured Data Analytics Agent: NL2Pipeline

NL Query

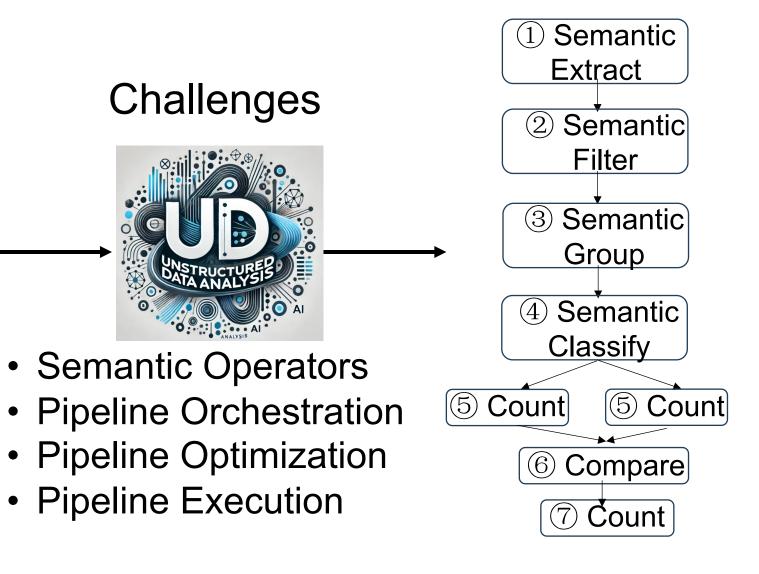
Count the number of movies directed by Steven Spielberg that the number of positive reports is larger than the number of negative ones by their report sentiments.



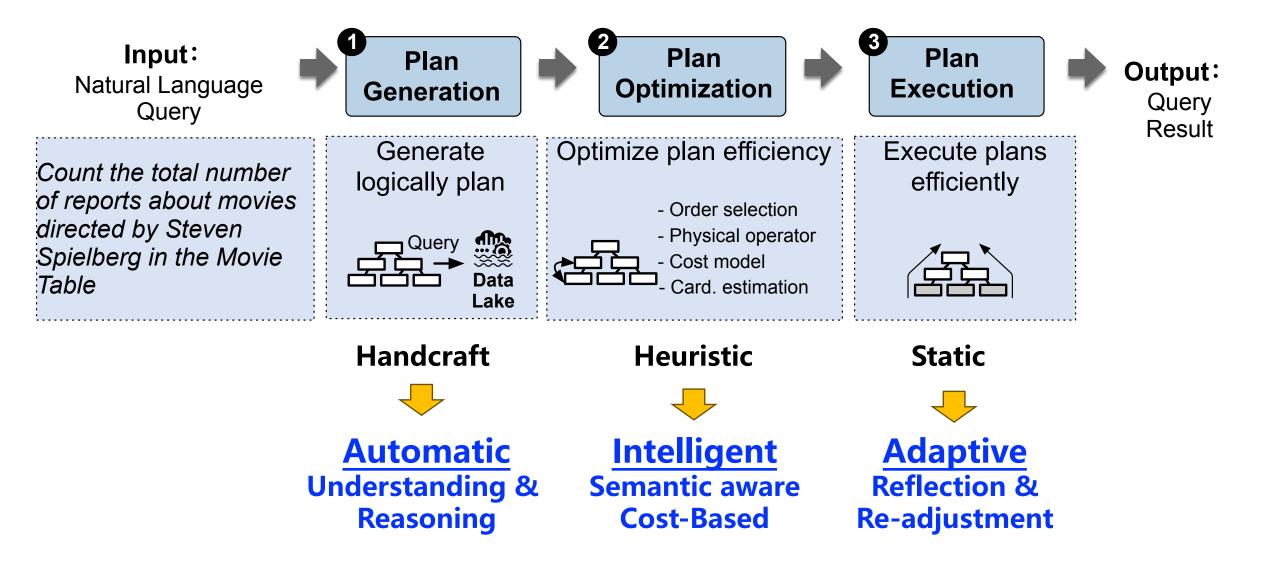
Unstructured Data Analytics Agent: NL2Pipeline

NL Query

Count the number of movies directed by Steven Spielberg that the number of positive reports is larger than the number of negative ones by their report sentiments.

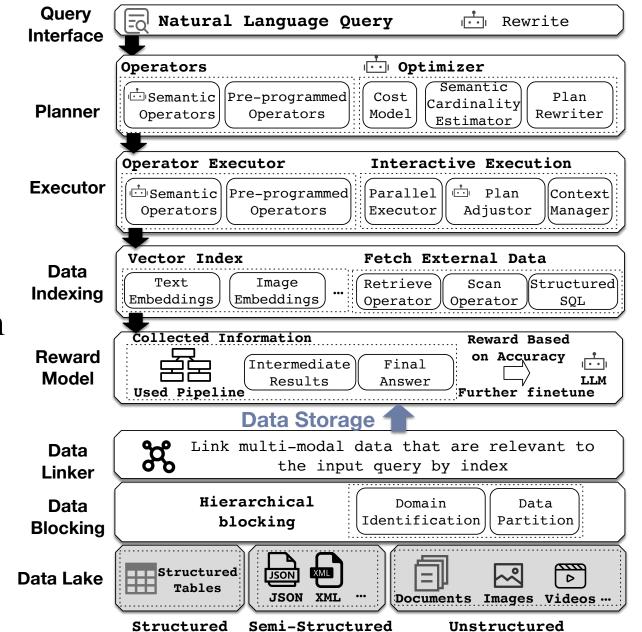


Unstructured Data Analytics Agent : Overview



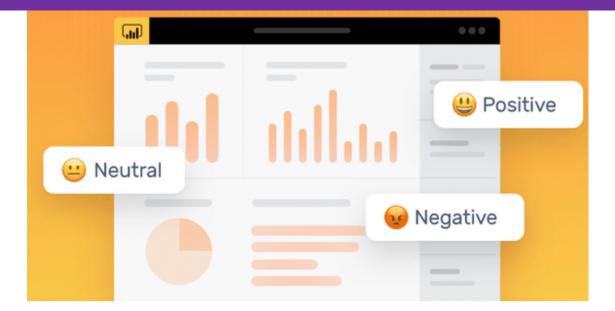
Unstructured Data Analytics Agent : Architecture

- Semantic Query: NL
- Semantic Operators:
 - LLM Semantic Operators
 - Programmed Operators
- Semantic Planning:
 - Pipeline orchestration
- Semantic Optimization & Execution
 - Multi-goal optimization
 - Interactive execution
- Self-reflection
 - COT, Reward model
- Semantic Indexing
 - Vector indexes



Unstructured Data Analytics Agent: Semantic Operators

- Extension from DB Operators
 - Semantic filter
 - Semantic projection
 - Semantic join
 - Semantic group-by
 - Semantic order-by
- Unstructured Operators
 - Semantic extract
 - Semantic classify
 - Semantic segmentation







Semantic Operators: Two Examples

✓ Semantic Filter

• Logical Representations:

- [Entity] satisfy [Condition]
- [Entity] that [Condition]

• Physical implementations:

Keyword filtering
 Embedding-based filtering
 LLM filtering

✓ Semantic GroupBy

- Logical Representations:
 - Group [Entity] by [Attribute]
 - For each [Entity], aggregate
 - The number of [Entity]
- Physical implementations:

 Hash-based Groupby
 Embedding-based Groupby
 LLM-based Groupby

Logical: Fixed Reserved Words \rightarrow Semantic Words (for NL queries) Physical: Fixed implementation \rightarrow Semantic implementation

Semantic Operators: Definition

- Relational operators are insufficient for unstructured data analytics
 - Lack semantic processing capabilities
- To address this, we manually identify a set of operators to support more comprehensive analytics, each defined with:
 - Input
 - Output
 - Predefined execution processes (physical operators)
 - A set of logical representations
- A logical representation is a structured template that abstracts the semantic essence of NL expressions into placeholders like Entity and Condition, capturing distinct semantic roles.
 - Filter: [Entity] satisfy [Condition]; [Entity] that [Condition]; [Entity] by [Condition]

Semantic Operators: Logical/Physical Implementation

• Logical operators: Filter, Extract, Compare, Group By, Classify, Order By ...

Physical operators: Pre-programmed, LLM-based, LLM-based UDF

THE LOGICAL OPERATORS, THEIR INPUTS, OUTPUTS, CORRESPONDING PHYSICAL OPERATORS, AND EXAMPLE LOGICAL REPRESENTATIONS.

Operator	Input	Output	Pre-programmed Implementation	LLM-based Implementation	Example Logical Representation	
Scan	List	List	Linear Scan, Index Scan	-	documents satisfy [Condition]	
Filter	List	List	Exact condition filtering	Semantic filtering	[Entity] that [Condition]	
Compare	A, B, Condition	A/B	Standard comparison, <i>e.g.</i> , >, <	Semantic comparison	larger in [Entity] and [Entity]	
GroupBy	List	List of List	Grouping by exact attributes	Semantic grouping	aggregate [Entity] by [Attribute]	
Count	List	Number	Standard aggregation (Count)	Semantic count	number of documents [Condition]	
Sum	List	Number	Standard aggregation (Sum)	Semantic sum	the total sum of [Entity]	
Max	List	Number	Standard aggregation (Max)	Semantic max	the maximum of [Entity]	
Min	List	Number	Standard aggregation (Min)	Semantic min	the minimum of [Entity]	
Average	List	Number	Standard aggregation (Average)	Semantic average	the mean of [Entity]	
Median	List	Number	Standard aggregation (Median)	Semantic median	the median of [Entity]	
Percentile	List	Number	Standard aggregation (Percentile)	Semantic percentile	the k-th percentile for [Entity]	
OrderBy	List	List	Numerical/lexicographical sort	Semantic sorting	Sort [Entity] [Condition]	
Classify	Text	Class	Rule-based/ML-based classification	Semantic classification	The type of [Entity]	
Extract	Text	Text	Keyword/Regex extraction	Semantic extraction	get [Entity] from documents	
ТорК	List	List	Numeric ranking	Semantic ranking	the top [Number] [Entity]	
Join	List, List	List	Join by key	Semantic join	[Entity] that also occurs in [Entity]	
Union	Set, Set	Set	Standard set union	Semantic set union	set union of [Entity] and [Entity]	
Intersection	Set, Set	Set	Standard set intersection	Semantic set intersection	in set [Entity] and in [Entity]	
Complementary	Set, Set	Set	Standard set complementary	Semantic set complementary	in set [Entity] not in [Entity]	
Compute	List	Number	Programmed Mathematical Equation	Semantic computation	sum of squares of [Entity]	
Generate	Text	Text	-	LLM invocation	explain the result	

Pipeline Planning: Automatic Orchestration

- **Overview**: progressively identifying appropriate pre-defined logical operators and reducing the query with the operators.
 - ① Semantic Parsing: extract the logical representations from the query
 - ② Operator Matching: identify the matched logical operators
 - ③ Query Reduction: reduce the logical operators to generate a plan
 - ④ Error Handling: backtrack to the previous reduction

Semantic parsing	Operator Matching	Query Reduction N	lext Iteration
Count the number of <u>movies</u> directed by Steven Spielberg that the number of positive reports is larger than the number of negative ones by their report comments.	1. Extract 2. Compare 3. Groupby 4. Count	Count the number of [Extract] that the number of positive reports is larger than the number of negative ones by their report comments.	

Pipeline Orchestration

Count the number of movies directed by Steven Spielberg that the number of positive reports is larger than the number of negative ones by their report sentiments.

Pipeline Orchestration

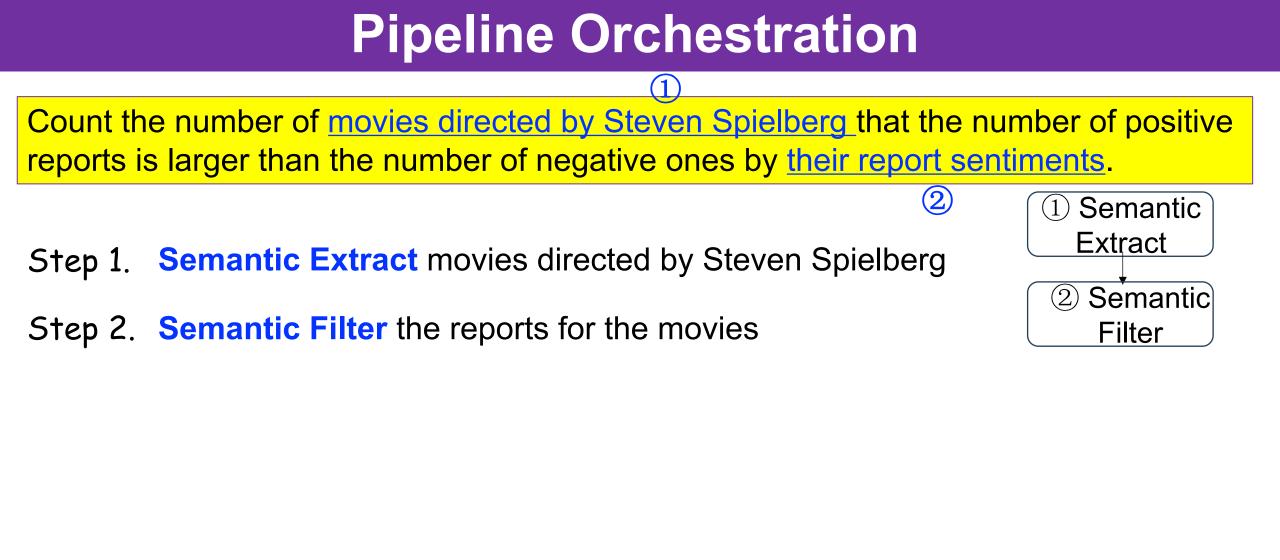
Count the number of movies directed by Steven Spielberg that the number of positive reports is larger than the number of negative ones by their report sentiments.

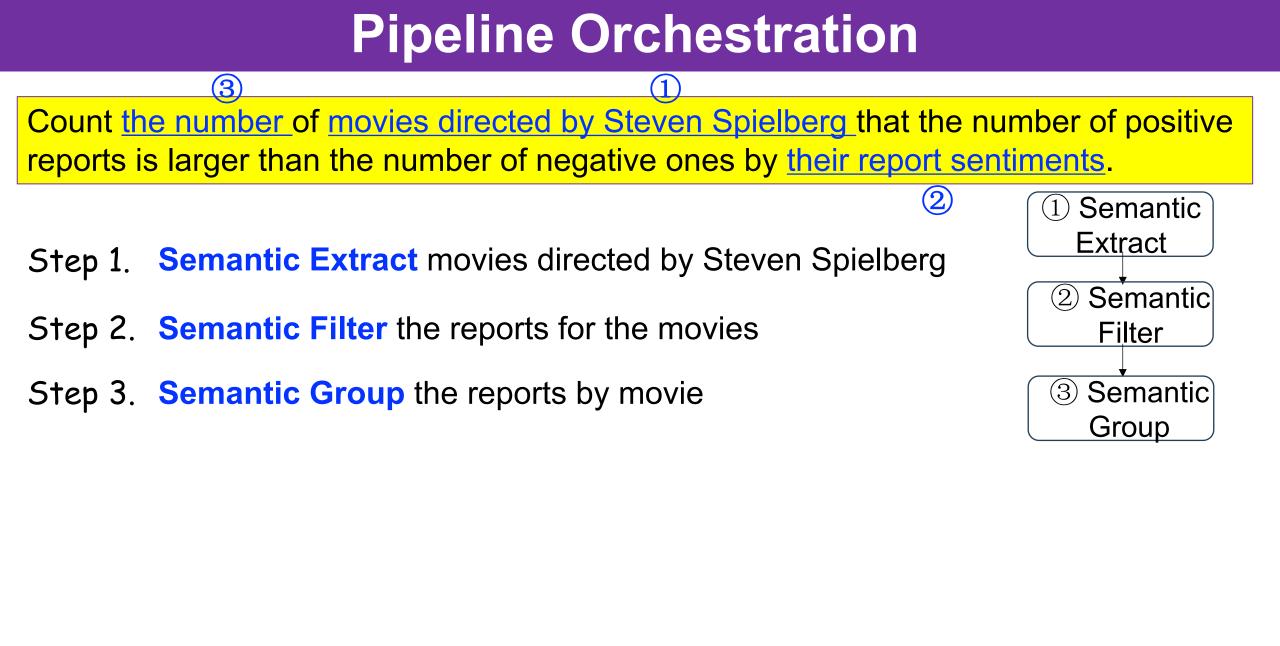
Step 1. Semantic Extract movies directed by Steven Spielberg

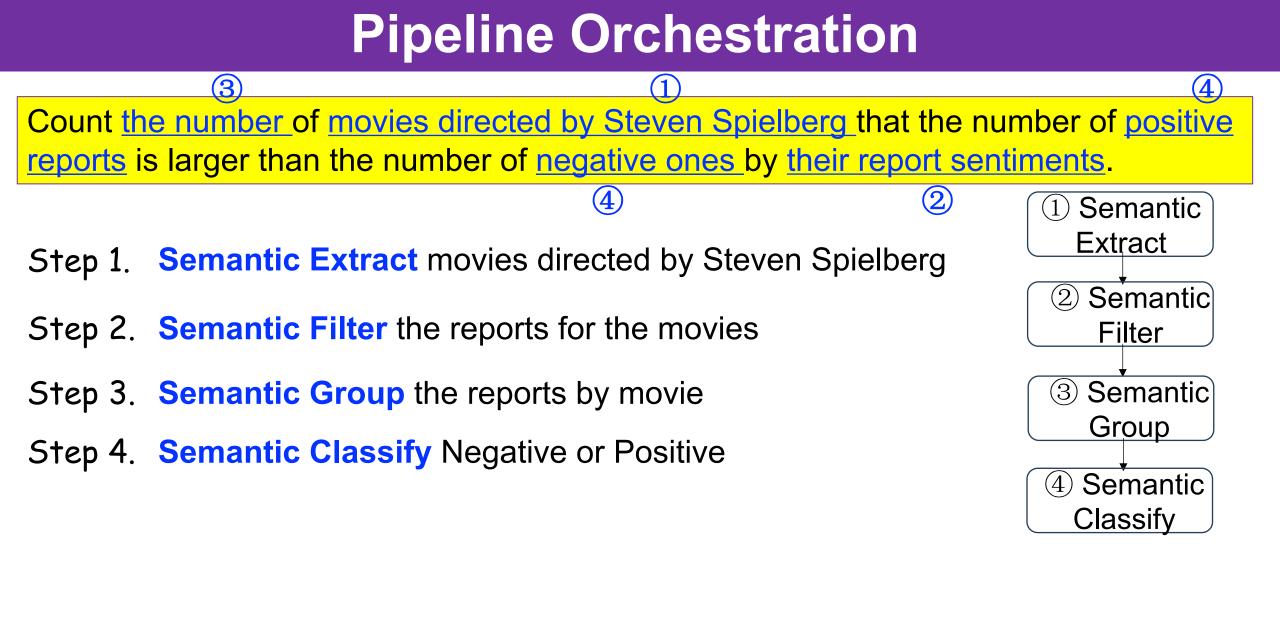
Semantic

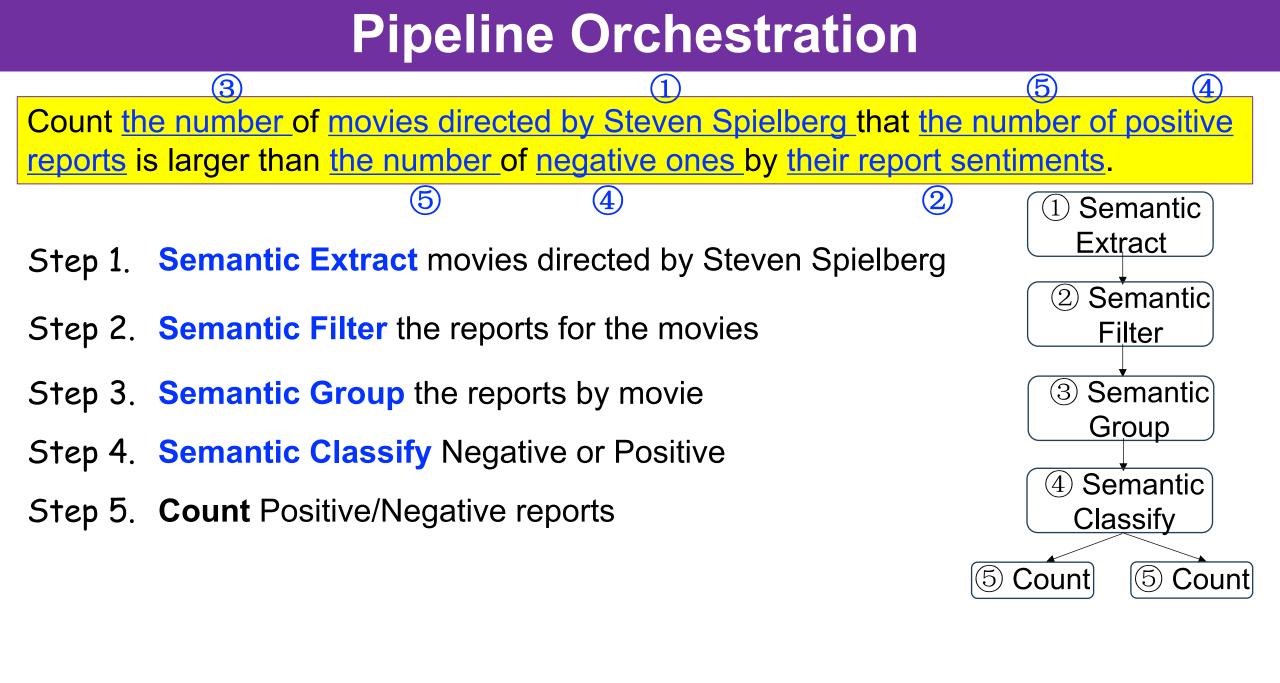
Extract

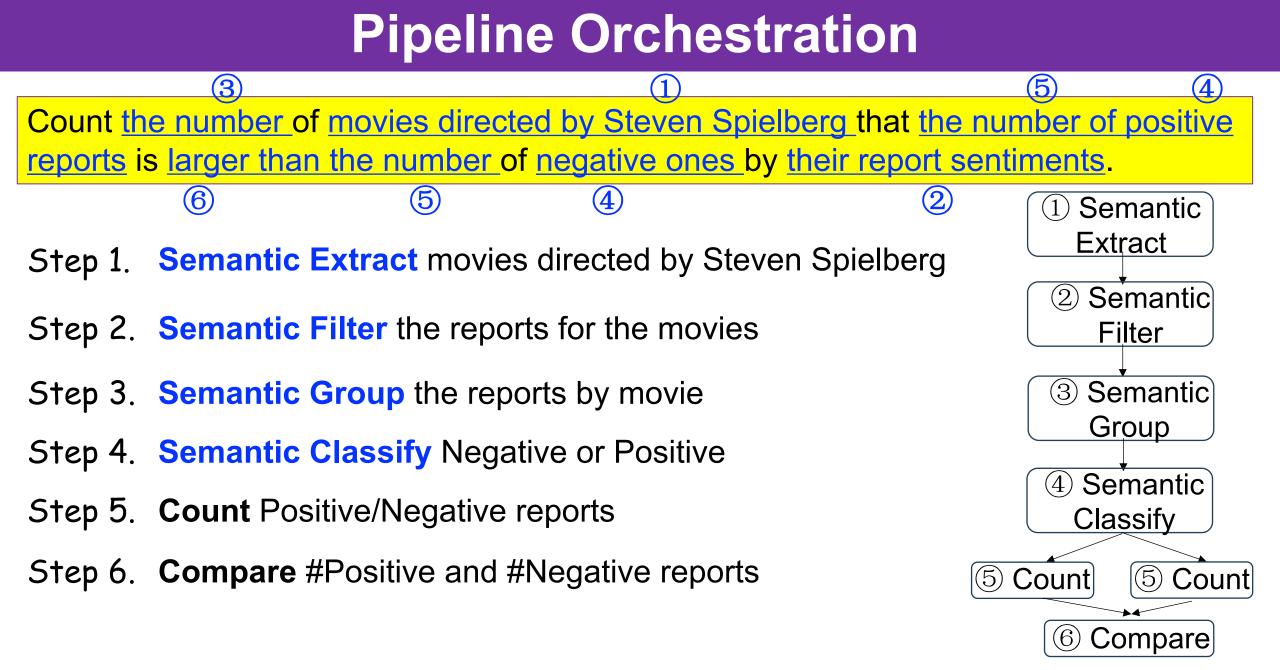
(1)













 $\mathbf{(3)}$ 5 (4 Count the number of movies directed by Steven Spielberg that the number of positive reports is larger than the number of negative ones by their report sentiments. (5)

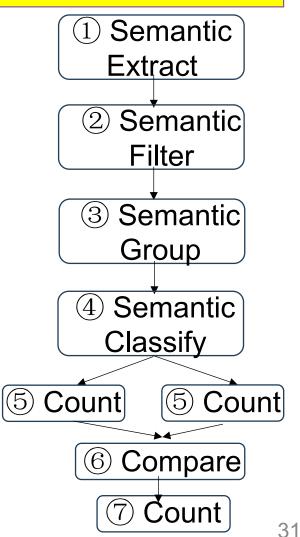
 $\mathbf{4}$

- **Semantic Extract** movies directed by Steven Spielberg Step 1.
- Step 2. Semantic Filter the reports for the movies
- Step 3. Semantic Group the reports by movie
- Step 4. Semantic Classify Negative or Positive
- Step 5. **Count** Positive/Negative reports

(7)

 $(\mathbf{6})$

- Step 6. **Compare** #Positive and #Negative reports
- Step 7. **Count** the groups with more Positive reports



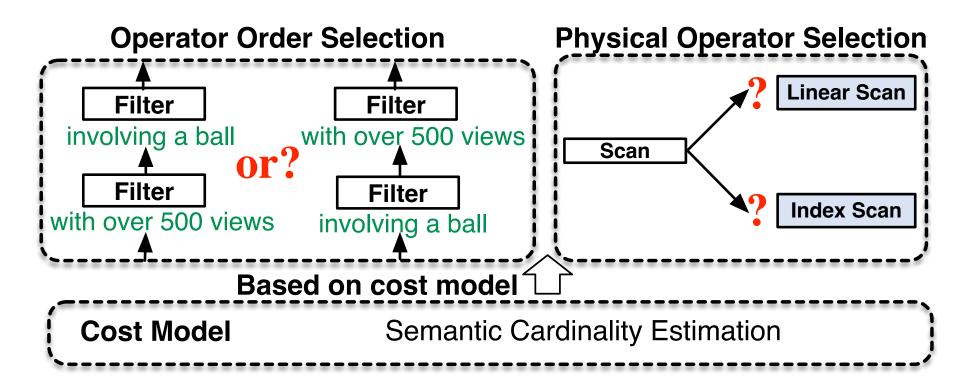
(2)

Pipeline Planning: Error Handling

- Overview: progressively identifying appropriate pre-defined logical operators and reducing the query with the operators.
 - ① Semantic Parsing: extract the logical representations from the query
 - **②** Operator Matching: identify the matched logical operators
 - ③ Query Reduction: reduce the logical operators to generate a plan
 - **④** Error Handling: backtrack to the previous reduction
 - If all candidate operators cannot reduce the query:
 - backtracks to the query before the latest reduction
 - If no reduction path can fully decompose the query :
 - Append a Generate operator to produce an answer based on collected information via LLM (RAG).
 - Instruct the LLM to generate Python code for solving the remaining task (fallback to code generation).

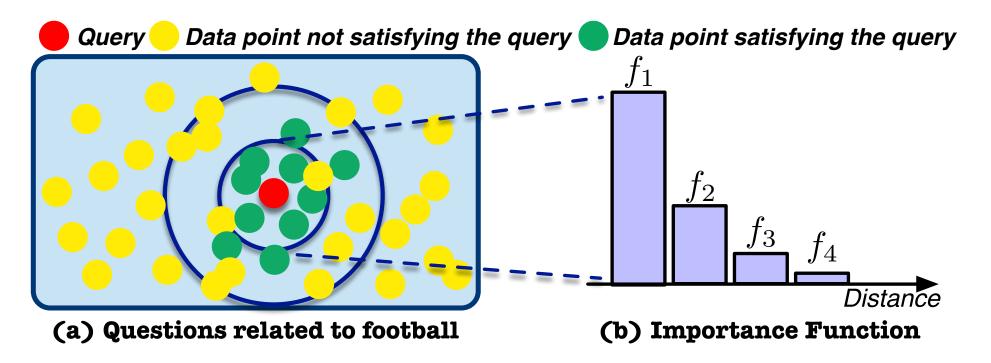
Pipeline Optimization

- Physical Operator Selection: LLM, Pre-Programmed, LLM Coding
- Cost Model:
 - LLM-based: Costs depend on input/output tokens and the number of LLM calls (Cardinality)
 - Program-based: Costs depend on input size and computational complexity



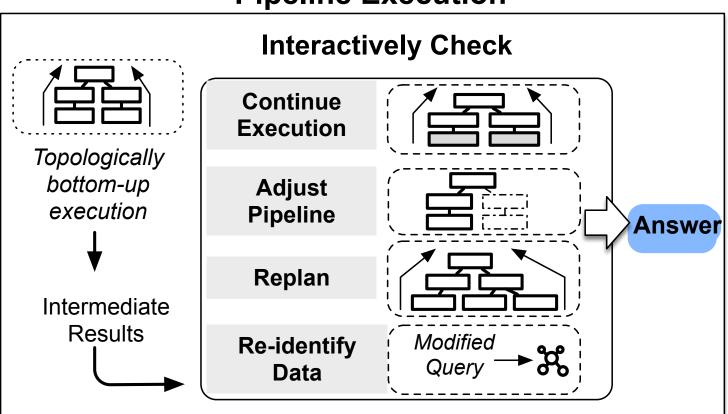
Pipeline Optimization: Semantic Cardinality Estimation

- Observation: data satisfying the query have small embedding distances to the query
- Key Ideas:
 - Estimation by importance sampling
 - Focus more on data points closer to the query vector



Pipeline Execution

- Interactive Plan Adjustment During Execution: When operator execution fails, dynamically adjusts the plan by continuously replanning
- Parallel Execution for low latency
- Multi-way Execution for high accuracy (Vector & LLM, Merge operators)



Pipeline Execution

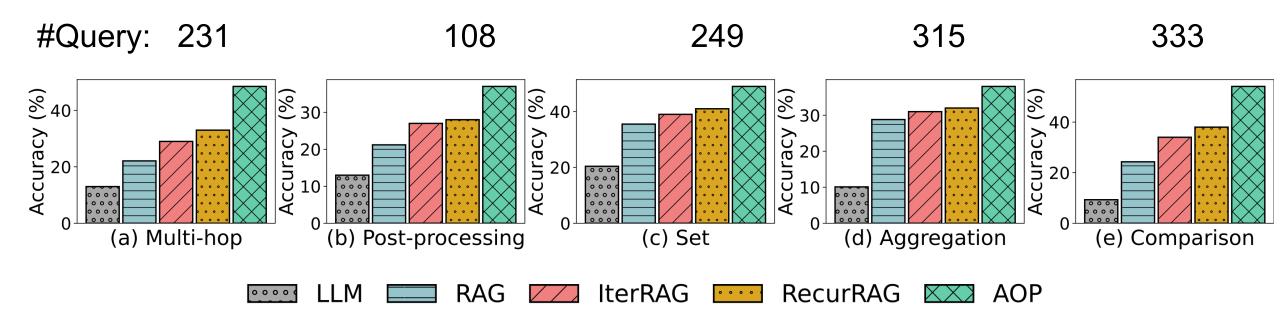
Pipeline Self-reflection

• Pipeline evaluation

- Generate multiple pipelines, and select the best pipeline
- •Using samples to get some preliminary results and evaluating them
- Reward Model
 - Evaluate the utility of a pipeline and give a reward
 - Compute the utility of the current local pipeline
 - Predict the utility of the following global pipeline

Experimental Results

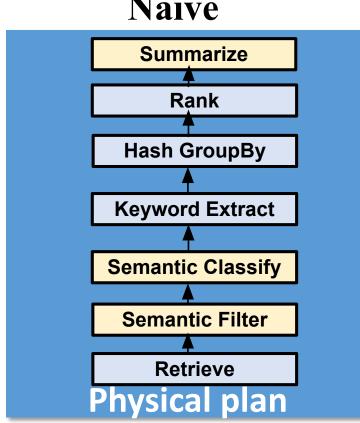
Real datasets and real NL queries



30%-40% accuracy improvement against GPT-4

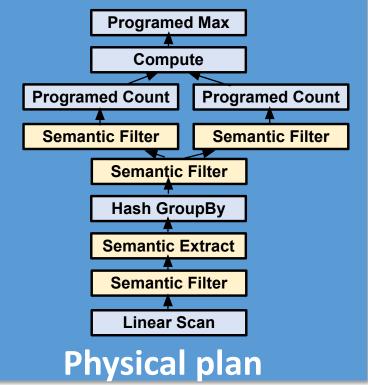
Experiments: Case Study

Which ball sport, among questions with over 500 views, has the highest ratio of injuryrelated questions to training-related questions?



Naïve

Unify Agent



Fail to execute

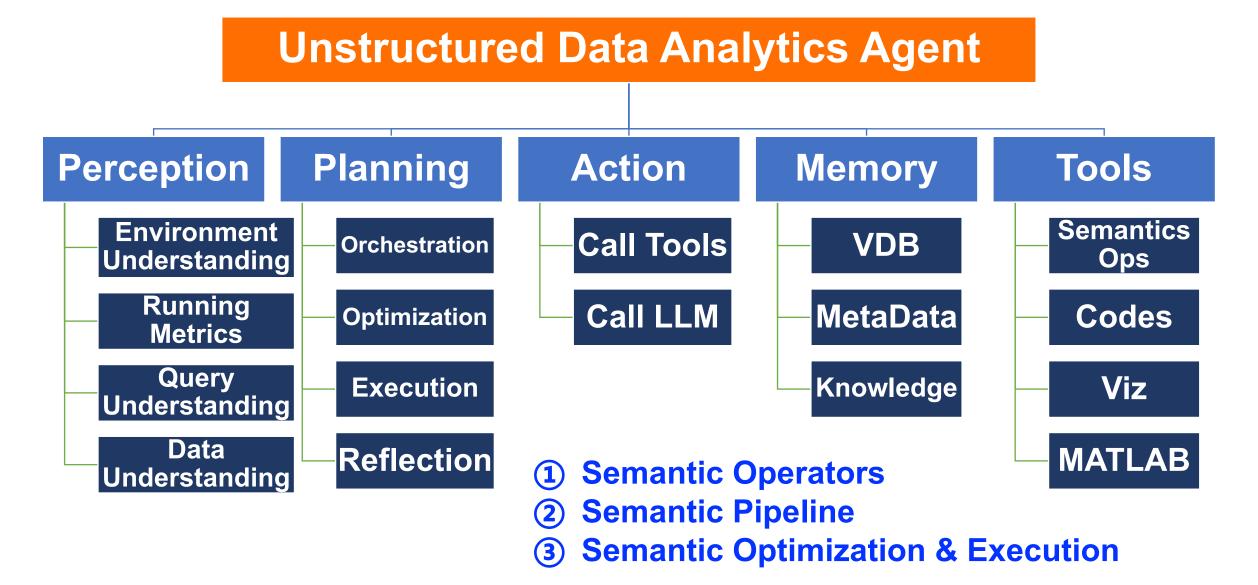
Obtain correct answer

Unstructured Data Analytics Agent

- ✓ Standard semantic operators for pipeline orchestration
- ✓ Automated pipeline orchestration for semantic data analytics
- ✓ Pipeline optimization & execution techniques
- ✓ Automatic support for multi-hop and semantic analytics
- Extensive experiments demonstrate that our method achieves both high accuracy and high efficiency.

Open source: https://github.com/TsinghuaDatabaseGroup/Unify

Unstructured Data Analytics Agent



Jiayi Wang, Guoliang Li. AOP: Automated and Interactive LLM Pipeline Orchestration for Answering Complex Queries. CIDR 2025



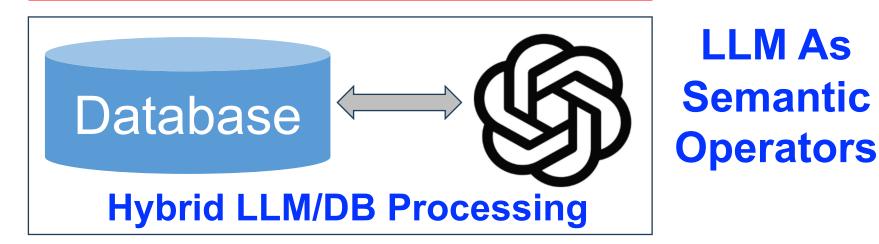
Data Agent for Semantic Structured Data Analytics

Semantic Structured Data Analytics Agent

What are the number of positive and negative reviews for sci-fi movies given by users located in the capital of the US?

Semantic Filter **NL** Queries SELECT COUNT(Review) Semantic Groupby **FROM MovieReview** Semantic Orderby NL2SQL WHERE City = Semantic Classify SemanticExtract(US) AND Semantic Join SemanticClassify(Movie)="sci-fi" Semantic SQL Semantic Extract SemanticGroupBy(Review) Semantic Transform

Semantic SQL Processing

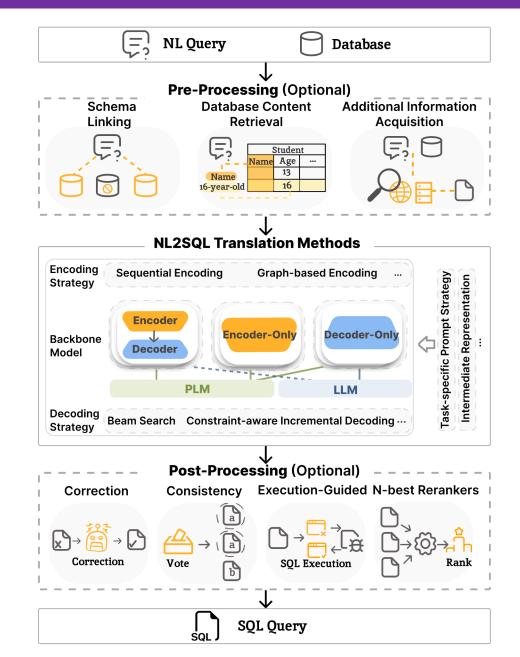


Semantic SQL: SQL with Semantic Operators

- SQL + Semantic Operators: (LLM to execute Semantic operators)
- Semantic Acquire: Acquire external knowledge to answer a query
- Semantic Filter: Search for data entity semantically equal to query entity
- Semantic Classify: Categorize tuples based on semantic properties and criteria
- Semantic Group-by: Semantically group tuples
- Semantic Order-by: Semantically sort tuples
- Semantic Join: Semantically join tuples
- Semantic Transform: Transform SQL results to specific format or description

NL to Semantic SQL

- Query-Data Alignment
 - Query Rewrite
 - Query Augmentation
 - Schema Augmentation
 - Data Augmentation
 - Semantic Schema Linking
- NL2SemanticSQL Translation
 - Multiple SQL Generation
 - Best SQL Selection
 - SQL Reflection



Semantic Operator Rewrite

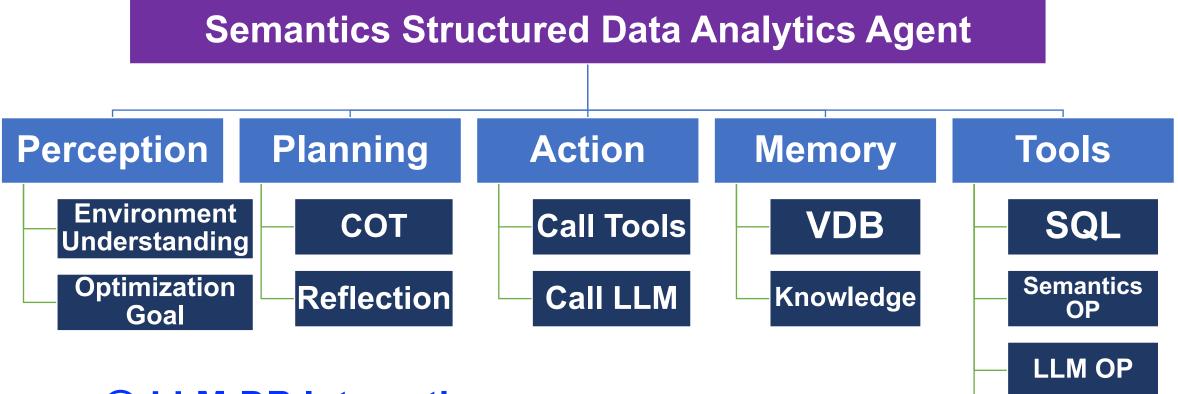
- Semantic operators are extensive.
- Reduce semantic operators to traditional operators
 - Semantic Acquire: report NBA players higher than Stephen Curry?
 - ① Acquire the height of Stephen Curry from LLM
 - ② Replace semantic acquire with height = 1.87m
 - Semantic Filter: report the conferences held in HK
 - Identify cities that are semantically equivalent to HK, such as Hong Kong, Pearl of the Orient, Heung Gong.
 - ② Replace semantic filter with "IN (HK, Hong Kong, Pearl of the Orient, Heung Gong)"

Semantic Plan Rewrite

- Invoking LLMs to execute semantic operators is expensive, it is vital to reduce LLM invocations
 - LLM Bypass
 - Using Embeddings/Vectors for Pruning
 - Using Small LLMs for Pruning
 - Using LLM Coding for Pruning (samples to verify the code)
 - Plan Rewrite
 - Push down: First DB operators and then LLM operators
 - Cost-based semantic operator order
 - Multi-Goal Optimization (Quality, Latency, Cost)

Small

Semantic Structured Data Analytics Agent



- **1** LLM-DB Interaction
- ② LLM Bypass
- **③ Semantic SQL Generation**

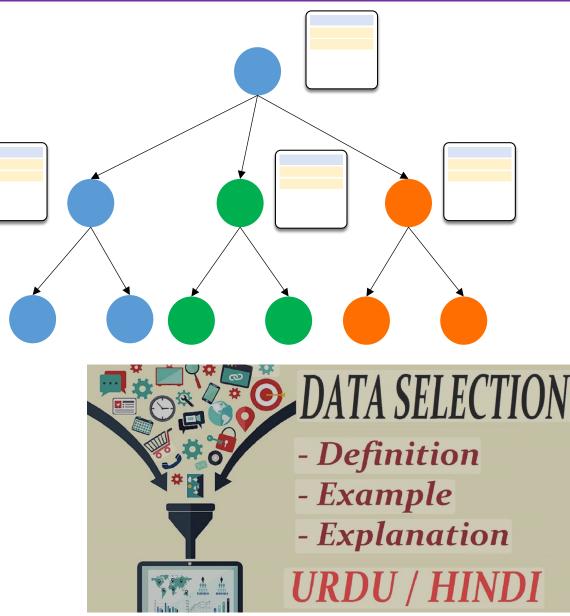
Preprogramed OP



Data Agent for Data Lake Analytics

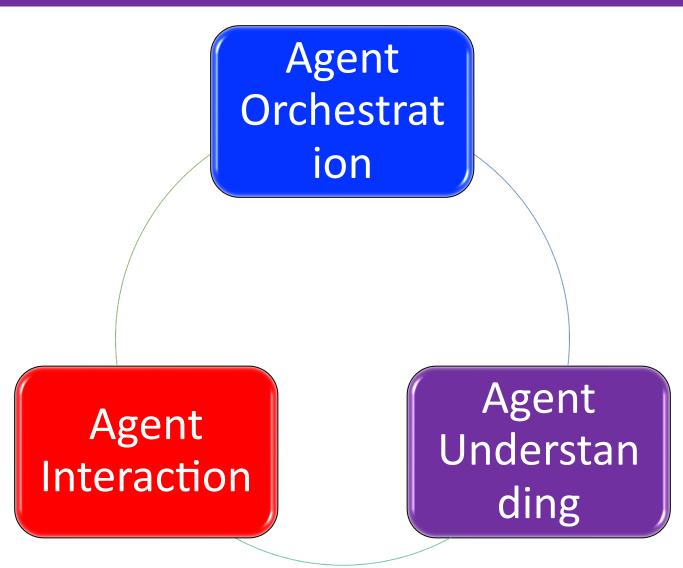
Data Lake Analytics Agent: Challenges

- Heterogenous Data
 - Data Linking
 - Data Embedding Model
 - OOD Indexing
- Semantic Source Selection
 - Unified Catalog
 - Semantic Data Organization
 - Hierarchical Data Exploration
- Pipeline Orchestration & Optimization
 - Agent Selection
 - Agent Interaction



Data Lake Analytics Agent: Multi-Agents

- Pipeline Orchestrator Agent
- Data Agents
 - Active Meta Data Management
 - Hierarchical Data Selection
 - Semantic Catalog
 - Semantic Data Statistics
- Analytics Agents
 - Unstructured Data Analytics
 - Structured Data Analytics
- Tool Agents



Why Multiple Agents

- Enhanced Data Analytics:
 - Unstructured Data Analytics Agent
 - ETL-based, Specific Data Types, Orchestration-based
 - Structured Data Agents
- Modularity
 - Data Analytics, Data Visualization, DB Interaction
- Collaboration and Coordination: leveraging shared knowledge and resources.
- Robustness and Fault Tolerance: the failure of one does not necessarily compromise the entire system
- Parallelism and Efficiency

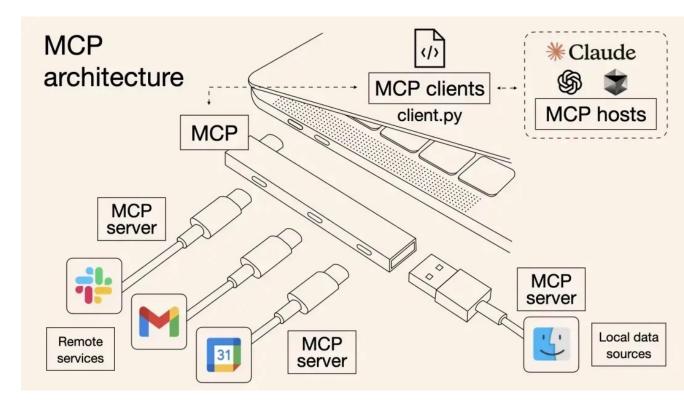
Agent-Agent Interaction Management

- Agent: Control Plane **Orchestration** A2A A2A A2A • Agent Capability Discovery \rightarrow Agent Card Agent Role Understanding Analytics Planning Data MCP **MCP** MCP Agent Role Description and Augmentation Manual Anomaly Hint COT Agent authentication Q&A TOT Diagnose View Agent Communication – A2A Protocol Docs Reflection Repair Index Code Slow SQL Knob Multi- Agent message
 - Agent status & lifecycle submitted, ready, working, completed

Agents-Tools Interaction

Model Context Protocol (MCP)

- Input Alignment: All models receive consistent and traceable information, eliminating the need for each to make independent guesses.
- State Synchronization: During task execution, state changes are recorded and broadcast in a standard format to prevent information drift.
- Inference Consistency: Intermediate inference results from different models can be read and reused by each other, forming a coherent chain of reasoning.

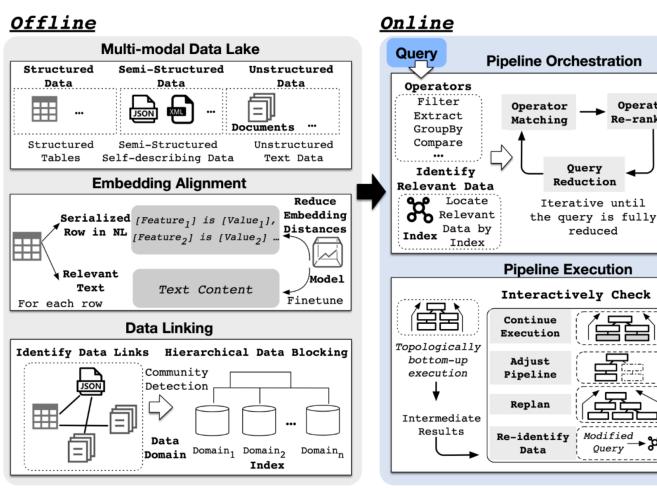


Data Lake Analytics Agent : Architecture

Offline Data/Knowledge Preparation

• Data Preparation for RAG and Prompt Engineering

- Semantic Segmentation
- Vector Indexing
- Data Linking
- Environment/Tool Understanding
 - Fine-tuning for alignment
 - Tool Calling
- Online Agent for optimization
 - Pipeline Orchestration
 - Pipeline Execution
 - Agent Interaction



Answer

Operator

Re-ranking

Execution

Pipeline

Data Lake Analytics Agent: Data Fabric

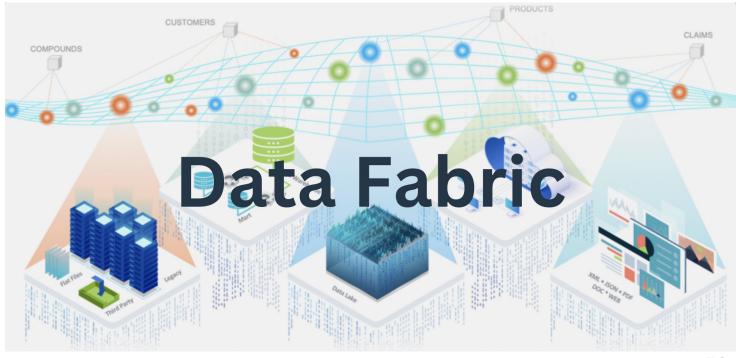
Unified Embedding

- A bi-encoder-based method that transforms diverse data types into a unified embedding space
- Data annotation and augmentation

Structured Data				٠	Unified Embedding		ŧ	Unstructured Data
Table				Serialized NL Row Expression Average Pair- wise Embedding		ł	Relevant Text Paragraphs	
Title	Director	Year	Description	a when an insatiable great white shark terrorizes Amity Island, a police chief Basic Embedding Model			When a massive killer shark unleashes chaos	
Jaws	Steven Spielberg	1975	When an insatiable great white shark terrorizes Amity Island, a police chief			on a beach community off Long Island, it's up to a local sheriff, a marine biologist, and an old seafarer to hunt the beast down.		
Her	Spike Jonze	2013	Love comes to a lonely writer in the sleekest of packages when he finds himself			>	Jaws won three Academy Awards for Best Film Editing, Best Original Dramatic Score, and Best Sound.	
				\Leftrightarrow		Aligned mbedding		Steven Allan Spielberg (born December 18,
						Model	_	1946) is an American filmmaker

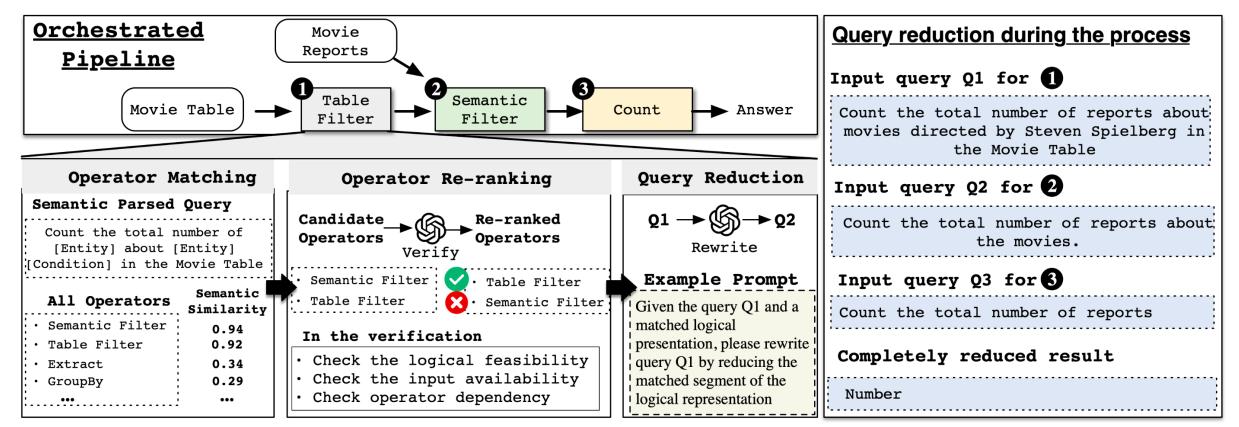
Data Lake Analytics Agent: Data Fabric

- Unified Data Access: Provides a single, consistent interface for accessing
 - data, facilitates real-time data access and sharing across the organization.
- Semantic Catalog and Semantic Data Organization
- Active Meta Data Management and Update
- Automatic Data Pipelines
- Data Lineage and Provenance
- Support for Diverse Tools
- Self-Service Analytics

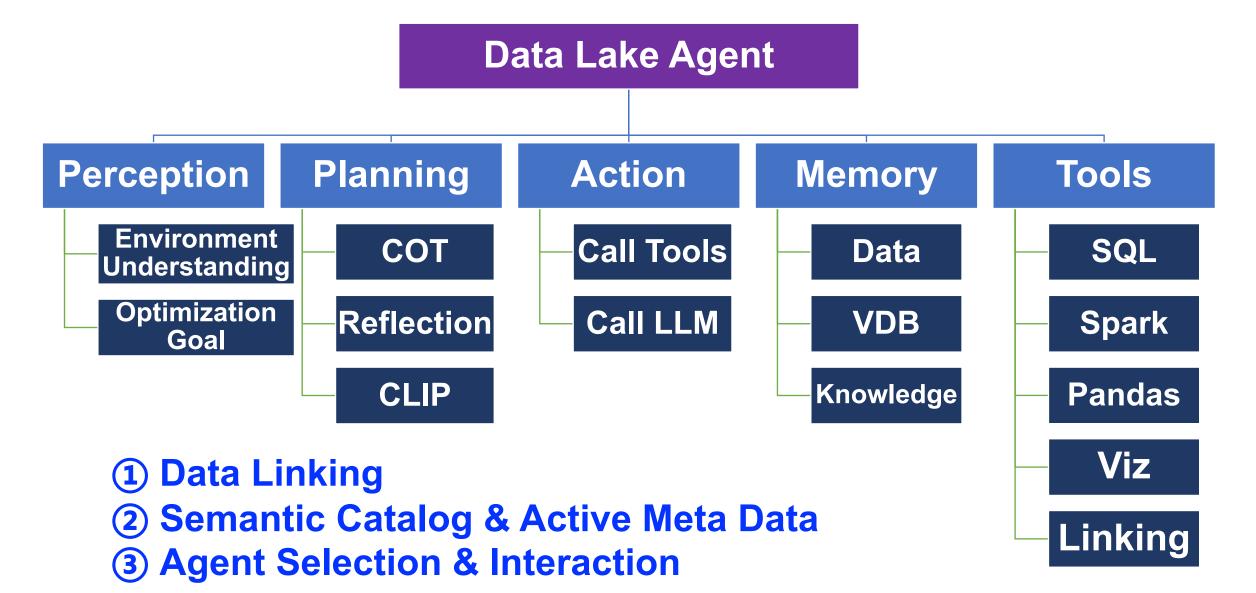


Data Lake Analytics Agent: Orchestration

- Pipeline Orchestration: Iterative Query Decomposition
 - Coarse-grained matching: identifying suitable agents
 - Fine-grained re-ranking: identifying suitable operators in agents
 - Reducing: applying a feasible operator to simplify the query



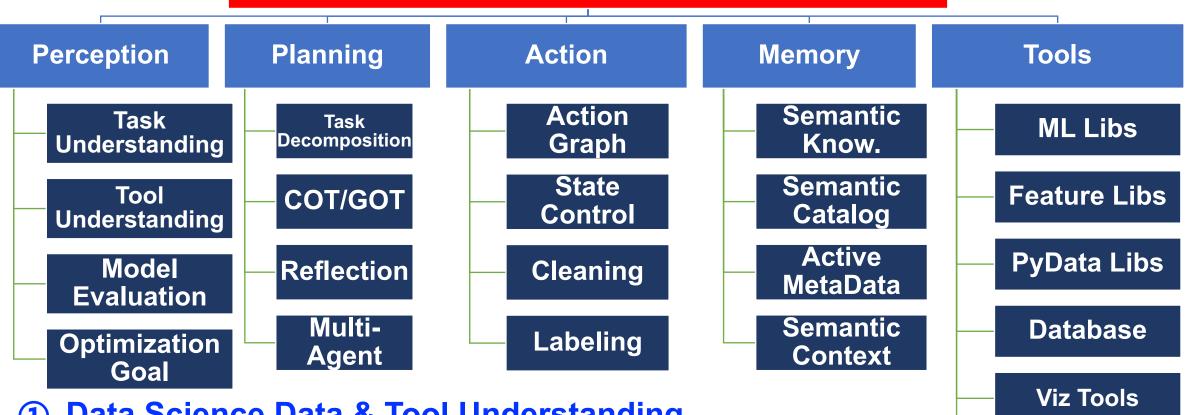
Data Lake Analytics Agent



Jiayi Wang, Guoliang Li, Jianhua Feng: iDataLake: An LLM-Powered Analytics System on Data Lakes. IEEE Data Eng. Bull. 49(1): 57-69 (2025)

Data Science Agent

Data Science Agent



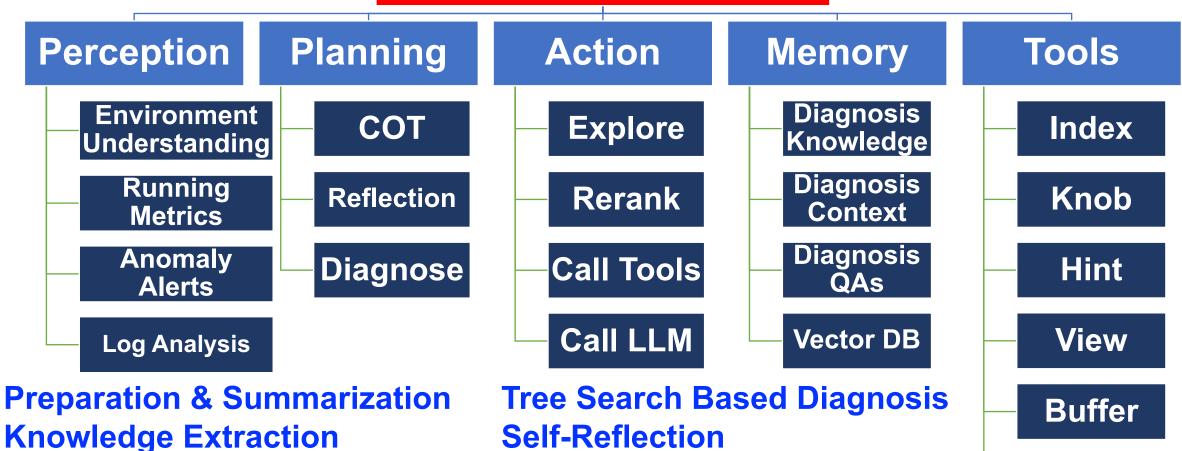
- Data Science Data & Tool Understanding
- **②** Data Science Task Understanding & Decomposition
- **③** Data Science Pipeline Reasoning & Planning
- **(4) Multiple Agents Collaboration & Interaction**

Yihang Zheng et al. Revolutionizing Database QA with Large Language Models: Comprehensive Benchmark and Evaluation. KDD 2025

Tuning Tools

Database Administrator Agent

DBA Agent



Collaborative Multi-Agent

Localized fine-tuning

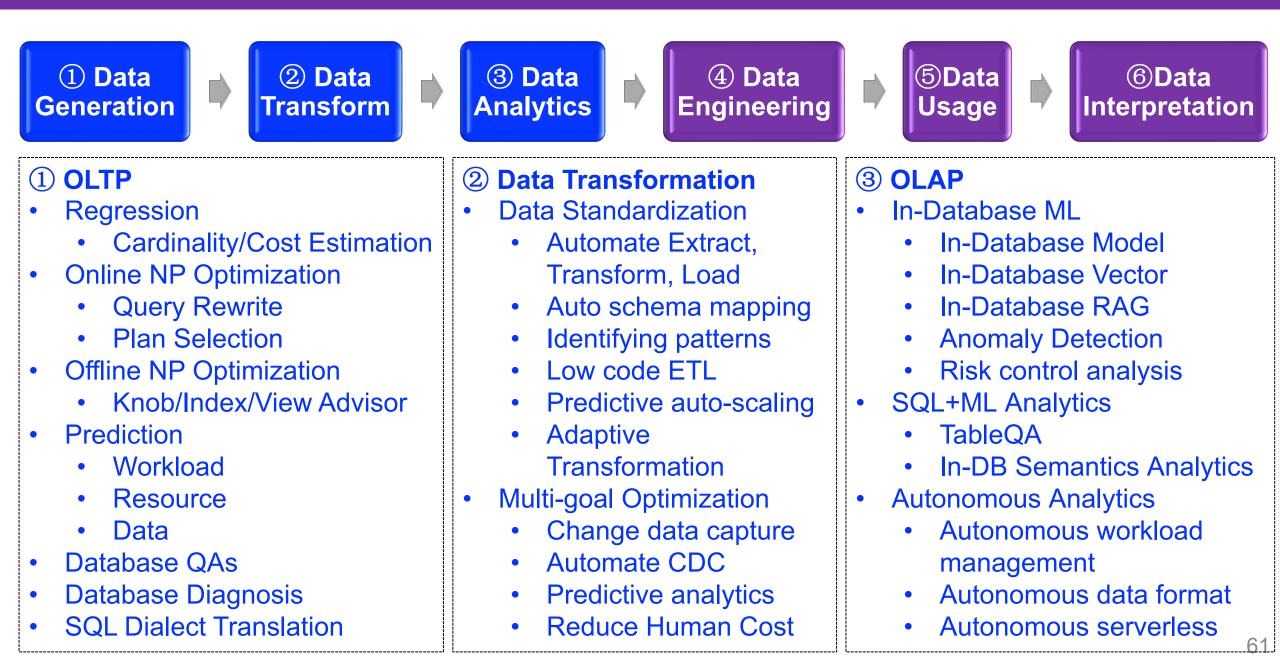
Xuanhe Zhou, Guoliang Li, et al: D-Bot: Database Diagnosis System using Large Language Models. VLDB. 17(10): 2514-2527 (2024)

Tool Learning

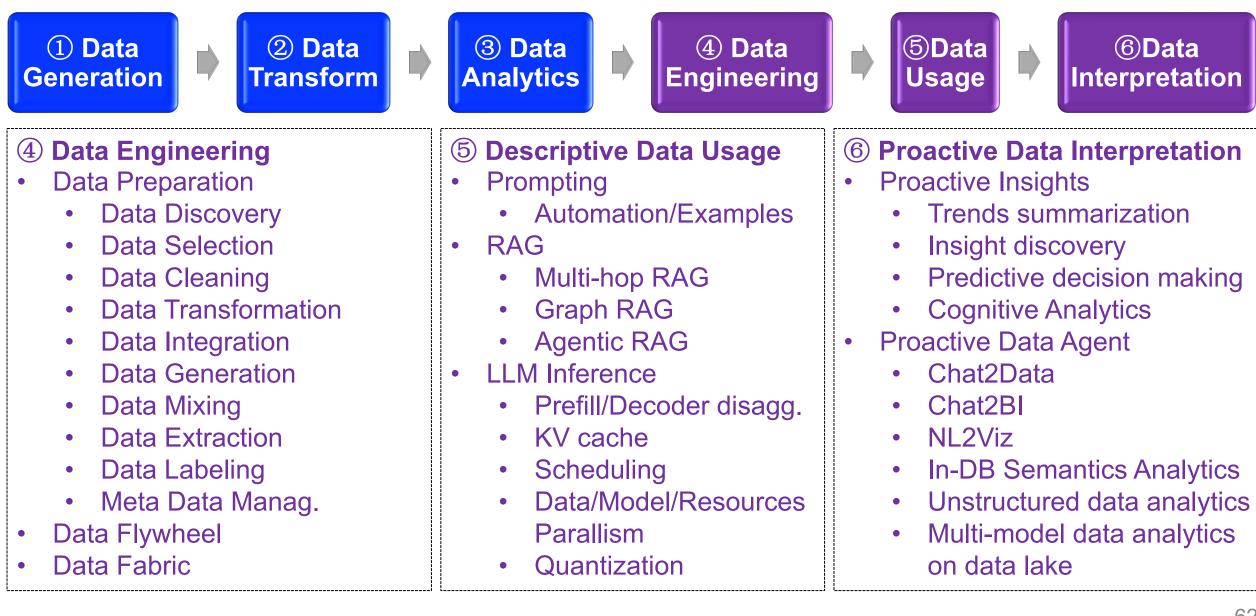
Environment Learning

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Data Agent Opportunities in Data Lifecycle Management

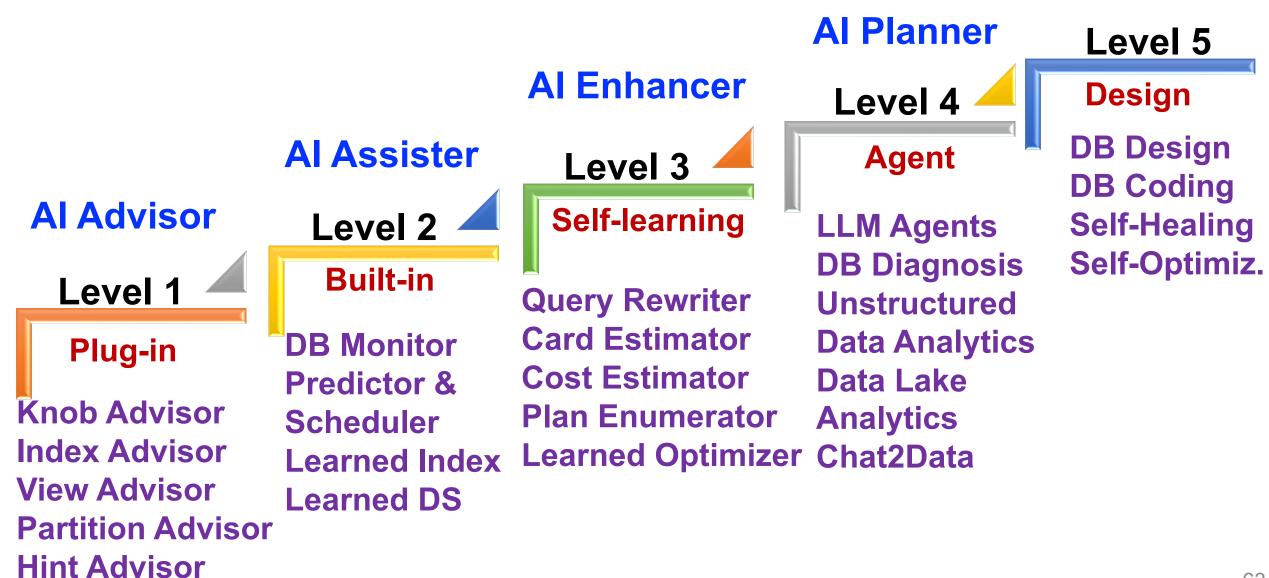


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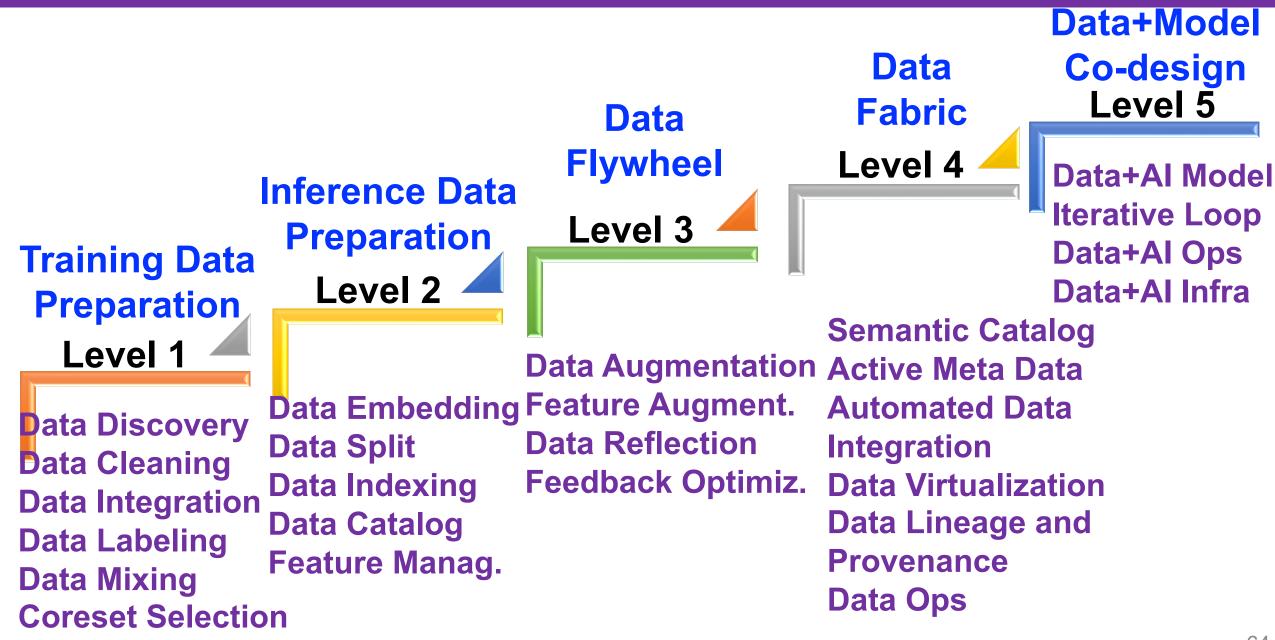


Five Levels of Al4Data

Al Designer



Five Levels of Data4AI



Conclusion

- Data+AI is important for data management and analytics
- It urges the use of Data+AI techniques to revolutionize data systems
 - Data science, Data Analytics, Data Lake
- Data Agent is a promising direction for Data+AI
 - Agent Orchestration and Scheduling
 - Multi-Agents Interaction
 - Tool Calling
 - Proactive Data Management
- Open-source systems for Data Agent





Thanks!

Slides: <u>https://dbgroup.cs.tsinghua.edu.cn/ligl/activities.html</u> Data+AI Paper List: <u>https://github.com/code4DB/LLM4DB</u> System: https://github.com/TsinghuaDatabaseGroup/Unify