Hierarchy Visualization: From Research to Practice
(Abstract)

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Hierarchy visualization has been a hot topic in the Information Visualization community for the last 15 years. A number of hierarchy visualization techniques have been invented, with each having advantages for some applications, but limitations or disadvantages for other applications. No technique has succeeded for a wide variety of applications. We continue to struggle with basic problems of high cognitive overhead (e.g., loss of context), poor fit to the data (e.g., problems of scale), and poor fit to the users task at hand (e.g., handling multiple points of focus). At the same time, information access improvements have made available to us much richer sources of information, including multiple hierarchies. In this talk, I will review what we know about hierarchy visualization, then describe our approach to visualization of multiple hierarchies with two techniques (Polyarchy Visualization and Schema Mapping), and conclude with lessons learned for basic hierarchy visualization and suggestions for future work.