Consensus and Agreement when Analyzing Qualitative Data

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what is the goal?
understand the real world a little better
understand the real world a little better

usually constrained to be about a very small part of the real world
try to see what is really in your data
one coder ....
Why more than one coder?

- because it is so much work
- because you might miss something
- because two sets of eyes are better than one
- because two perspectives are better than one
- because discussing your data is rich and enriching
What if you disagree?

- It needs to be discussed
- Can lead to a better understanding
- Can lead to more coding
- Can lead to starting over
- Can lead to another focus
- ...
What about inter-coder agreement?

- People are different
- Discrepancies between coders will occur
- Can lead to more coding
- Can lead to starting over
- Can lead to another focus
- …
Consensus?

- While some stats may tell you agreement is close enough
- In my experience discussions often continue until consensus
- As in grounded theory it is out of these discussions, re-examinations, and continued discussions that sometimes theory can emerge from the data.
rigorous qualitative study design needs constant re-thinking
Another analysis opportunity particularly suited for this community
visualization!
Visualizing coding

(c) from Scott et al. [18]
visualization!