

Risk of Bias 2 (RoB2) tool: the user point of view

Background: For years, the Cochrane RoB tool remained with no changes. However, in 2019, an updated tool, the RoB2, was introduced.

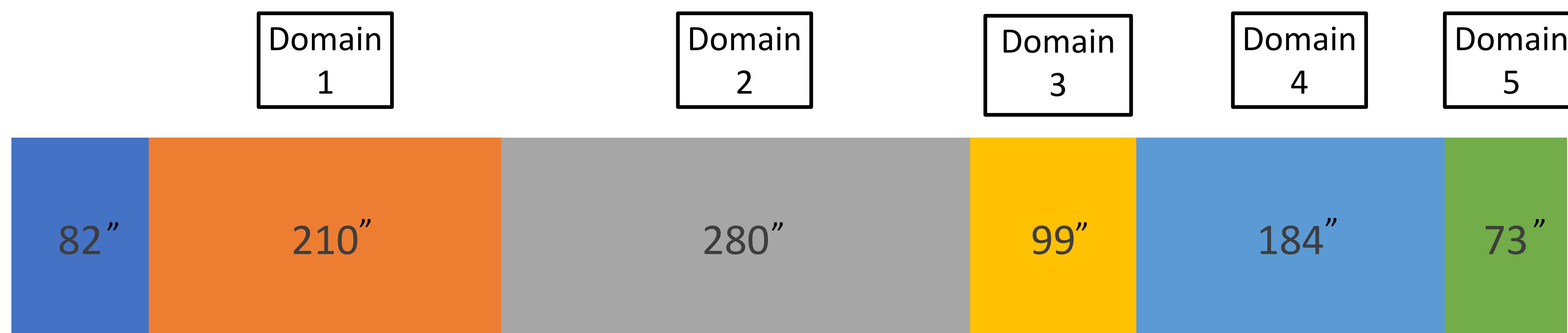
We aimed to describe the experiences and workload of using RoB2. Besides, we described some common questions and doubts that we, as an experimented team in systematic reviews, had during the process of risk bias assessment.

Methods

Case-series study

- 1 Two reviewers senior used RoB2 during the update of a Cochrane systematic review in the Cochrane GFG
- 2 We randomly selected 21 studies that had been included in the previous version of the review.
- 3 We measured the time workload in each of the following steps during the assessment of the main outcome: before starting, each of the five RoB2 domains, and the overall analysis. We also performed a qualitative evaluation of the reasons why some domains took longer than others
- 4 We evaluated 178 studies by title and abstract, selected 50 to evaluate by full-text and included 42 for analysis.

Mean Duration (seconds) of Each Stage of the RoB2 Assessment



The total time per study assessment was 970 ± 283 seconds, which corresponds to 16 minutes and 10 seconds \pm 4 minutes and 45 seconds. No differences were found between the reviewers.

One of the most challenging assessments was to determine deviations from the intended intervention aroused because of the trial context and in what extent these deviations are likely to affect the outcomes

Conclusion: In the transition from RoB1 to RoB2, two senior reviewers spent an average of around 16 minutes per study. Notably, the evaluation of Domains 1 and 2 necessitated a relatively longer assessment time. No significant differences in required time were observed between reviewers 1 and 2. The use of RoB2 is more time consuming than RoB1 and will probably require methodological support for first users.

