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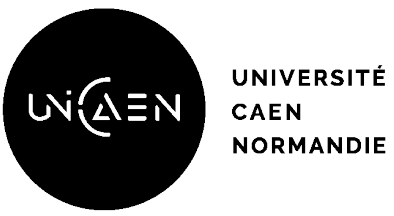
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THE BENEFITS OF AN EARLY OLFACTORY AWAKENING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSCIOUS OLFACTORY SKILLS



Maryse DELAUNAY¹, Ana REUTIMANN² & Marie ANQUETIL¹ - ¹ Laboratoire de Psychologie de Caen Normandie (UR 7452), Université de Caen Normandie, Caen
² Centre Hospitalier Robert Bisson, Service de maternité, néonatalogie et gynécologie obstétricale, Lisieux - ID 46



INTRODUCTION

Scarce studies have evinced olfactory preferences in preschool children under 4 years old (1, 2, 3). However, the development of early olfactory skills and their origins remain hypothetical at present. The aim of the present exploratory study, is to test and describe how adult scaffolding of olfactory awakening, conducted according to Jerome Bruner's recommendations (4) in a context of felicity (5), promotes the early development of olfactory skills.

MATERIAL & METHOD

- Ethic and protection of people committee agreements (21.04660.000041-MS01 - 2021-A03134-37)
- Participants involved : 13 children (7 males) from 16 to 42 months (M= 31 ± 10 months)
- Olfactory stimuli : objects added with natural fruits, or plants
- One-month longitudinal follow-up during 4 videotaped sessions
- Behavioural analyses with The Observer® XT17 software (Noldus), inter-observer reliability ($\kappa > 0,80$).

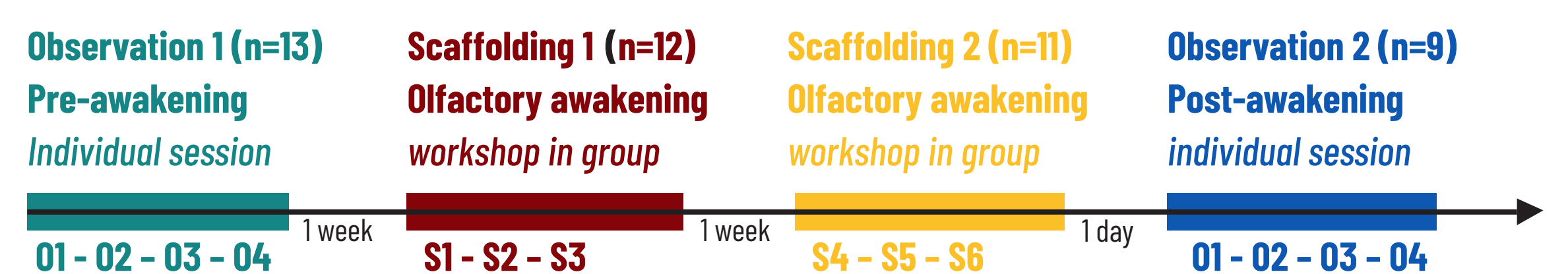


Figure 1. The procedure of longitudinal follow-up.

RESULTS



Figure 2. Individual developmental trajectories of target actions of active smelling of scented objects and looking at them just after smelling them and of behavioural inhibition.

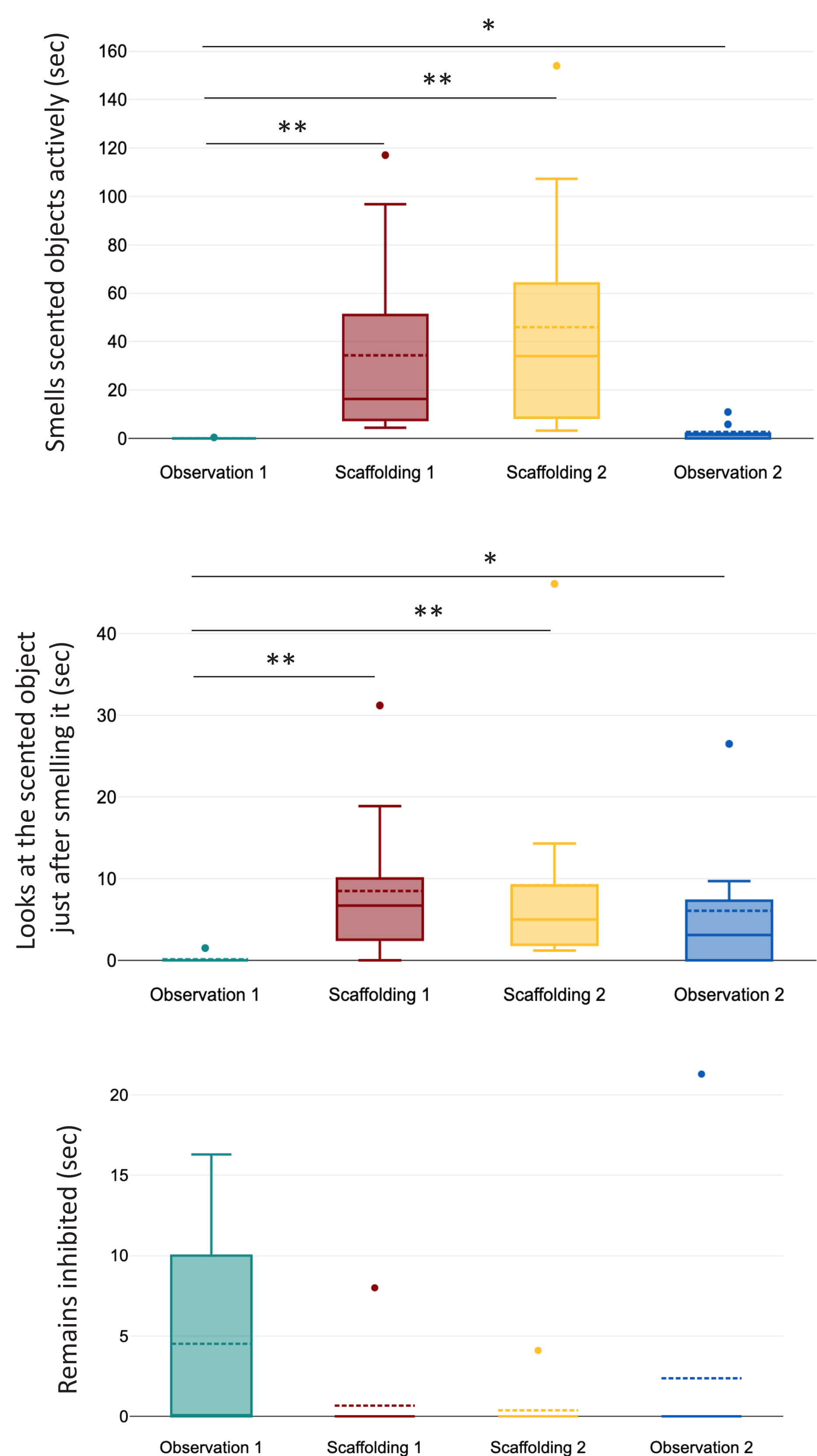


Figure 3. Within-subject comparisons of children active smelling of scented objects and looking at them just after smelling them with Wilcoxon tests (*: $p < 0,05$; **: $p < 0,01$).

CONCLUSION

This pilot study demonstrates that a brunerian scaffolding for an early olfactory awakening in a context of felicity favors the emergence of early conscious olfactory skills. Individual trajectories however show that behavioural inhibition blocks children's cognitive engagement.

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