INTRODUCTION

Canine Functional Analyses

- Functional analysis (FA) methodology may be extended to evaluating dog behavior problems (Dorey et al., 2012; Feuerbacher et al., 2016; Hall et al., 2015; Mehrkam et al., 2020; Pfaller-Sadovsky et al., 2019; Waite & Kodak, 2021; Winslow et al., 2018)
- Guardians can be taught to implement FA conditions with their dogs and FAs may yield clearer, more valid outcomes when guardians implement FA conditions (Hall et al., 2015, Pfaller-Sadovsky et al., 2019; Waite & Kodak, 2021)
- Behavior Skills Training (BST) can be used to teach others to implement FA conditions both in-person and online (Martens et al., 2019; Rios et al., 2020; Wacker et al., 2013)
- Only one FA of dog problem behavior manipulated the presence of another dog in FA conditions (Winslow et al., 2018)

Purpose

- To evaluate the function of a canine’s dog-directed reactivity defined as whining, growling, or barking in the presence of another dog that animal oriented toward that dog
- To provide remote BST to teach guardians to implement FA conditions
- For guardians to implement FA conditions with their dog with live, remote coaching from a Board Certified Behavior Analyst

Participants & Setting:

- Dog: Daisy, a 2.5 year old, spayed female American pit bull mix
- Dog Guardians: Amy & James
- Setting: Fenced-in yard on a farm in the Southwest United States

METHODS

Figure 1. Visual depiction of planned functional analysis conditions including the single function FA for escape from another dog, and the single function FA for access to another dog. The test conditions for escape and access are represented in panels A and B respectively. The control conditions for the escape and access functions are represented in panels C and D respectively.

RESULTS

Figure 2. Single function FA to evaluate the function of escape from another dog.

- Preparation: Guardian interview, observation via previously recorded videos, & development of FA conditions
- Single-function tests to evaluate two functions:
  - Escape from another dog
  - Access to another dog

Behavior Skills Training for guardians:

- Written instructions, video model, evaluation of procedural integrity when guardians implemented FA conditions with fake dogs, and feedback on practice implementation

- Implementation of single function test for escape (Day 1) and for access (Day 2)

DISCUSSION

Findings

- Successful identification of the function of Daisy’s reactive behaviors as escape from another dog.
- Successful implementation of BST to train guardians to conduct FA remotely with coaching from a BCBA. Procedural integrity averaged 97.5% across FA conditions

Limitations

- Fake dog may not evoke or elicit the target response in natural settings
- However, the use of real dogs presents safety and ethical concerns
- Could not rule out access function due to procedural limitations
- No treatment data were included to verify the function

Future Research

- Evaluate alternative or additional stimuli associated with dogs that could be manipulable in FA conditions
- Consider alternative measures for response classes such as reactivity
- Implement & evaluate function-based treatments to confirm FA results

REFERENCES


