

Does separation anxiety affect attention bias in dogs?

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INTRODUCTION

Many dogs suffer from separation anxiety. The **aim** of this study was to investigate **attention bias** in **dogs** with **separation anxiety** and dogs with no separation anxiety in situations of different emotional states.

RESULTS

Separation anxiety affected barking during isolation (Fig. 2). Both dogs with and without separation anxiety vocalised more, looked more at the door and were closer to the door during isolation, compared to both baseline and play.

METHODS

Three attention bias tests (ABTs) which included an **auditory threat** in form of a lion roar was performed on **26 dogs** (separation anxiety; yes: 14, no: 12) with **three different treatments** prior to the ABT (Fig. 1). The data was analysed in R using mixed models.

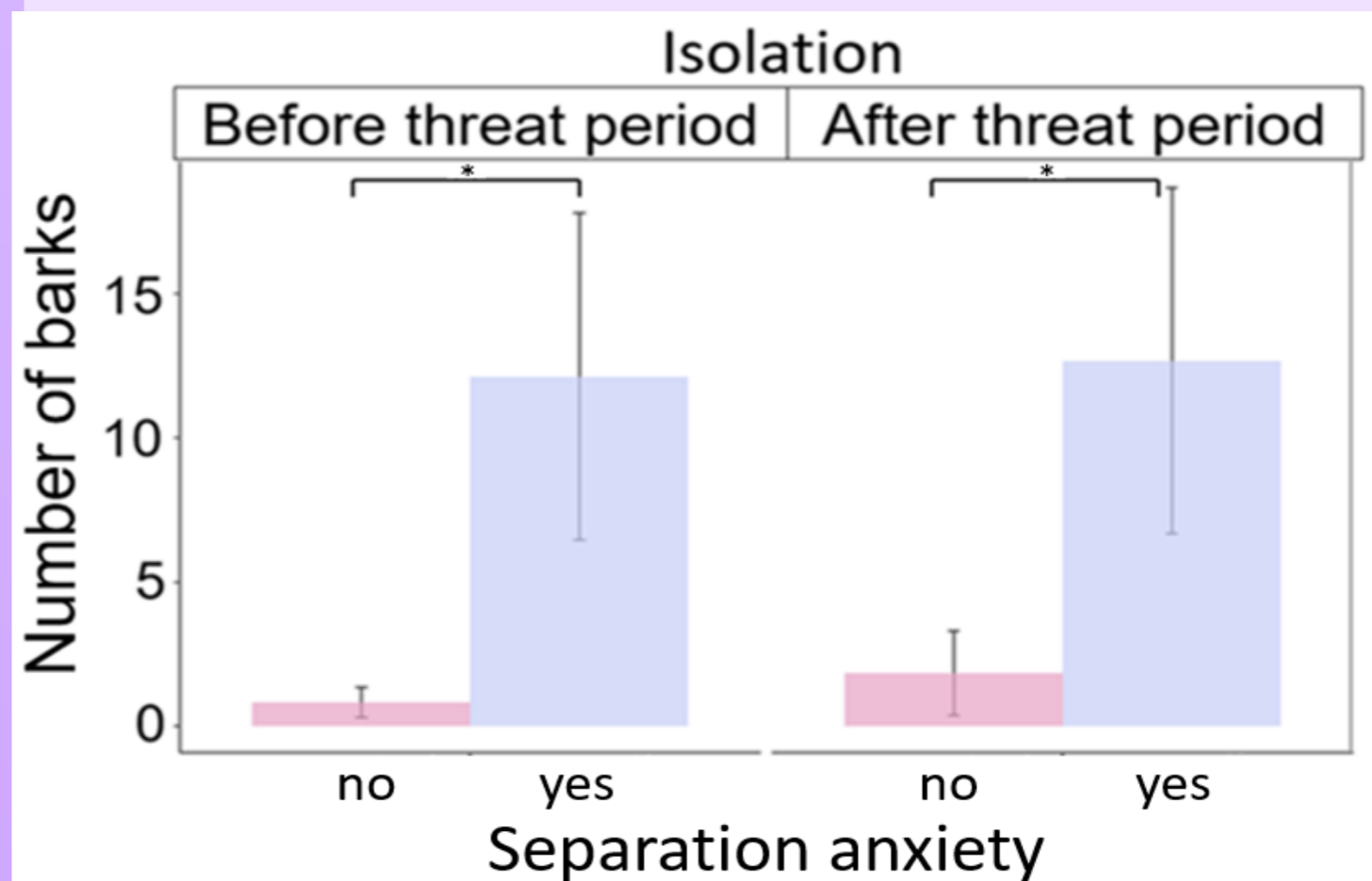


Figure 2. Mean ± SEM of how many times the dogs barked before and after the threat period during isolation ABT. *, $p < 0.05$

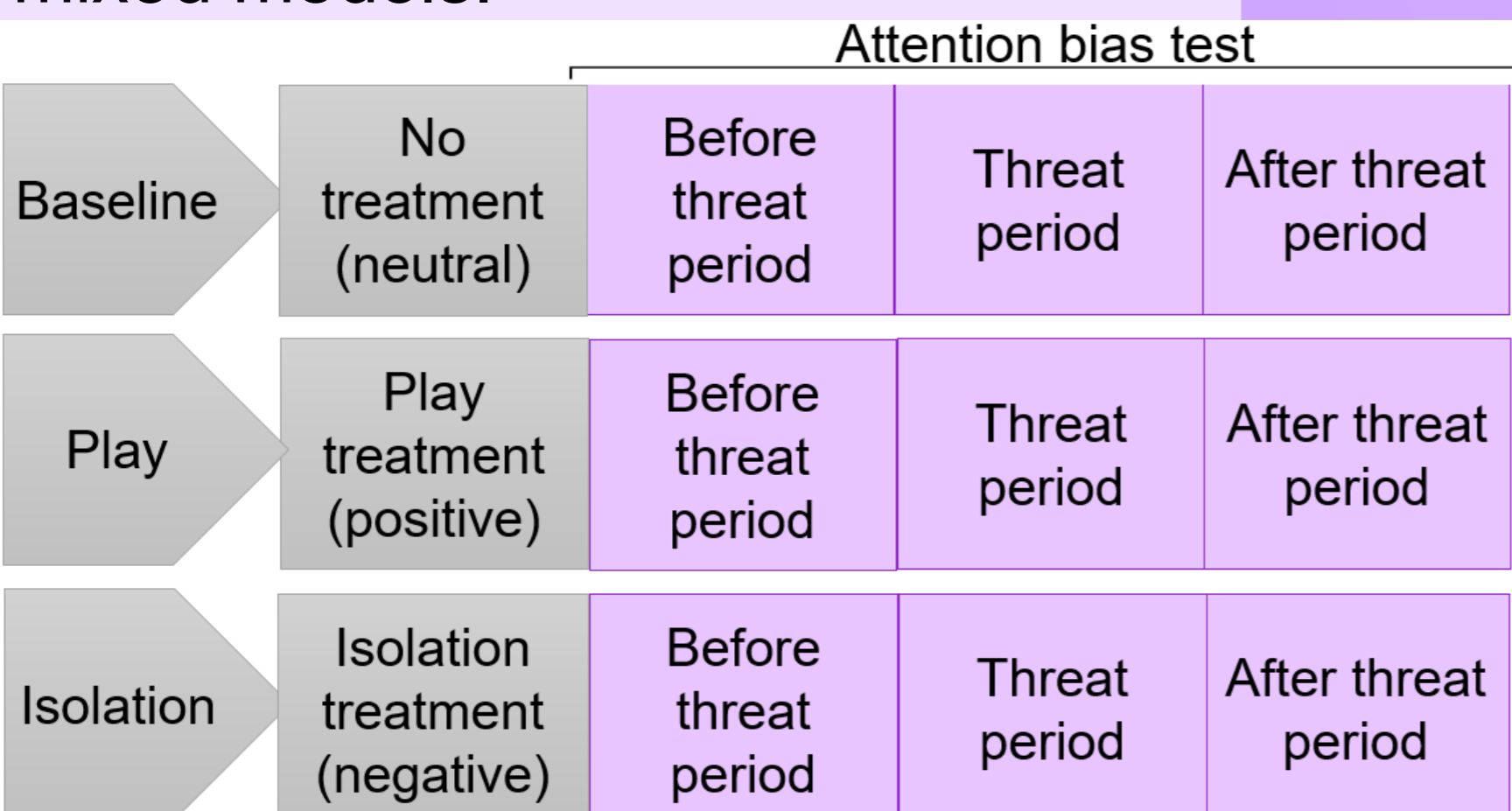


Figure 1. The experimental procedure of the study.

CONCLUSION

Separation anxiety does not affect attention bias in dogs.