



Original Contribution

SOCIALIZATION OF PUPPIES – A MARKER OF THEIR FUTURE BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

An investigation on the relationship between temperament and socialization upon the development of the behaviour of the dog was carried out. The test of Queinnek was applied on 10 puppies from the Dobermann and German Shepherd breeds. The temperament type of each puppy was determined with regard to characterize its future behaviour and the adequate relationships between dog and men. It is shown that socialization in puppies with temperament types L and F occurred easier and rapidly, thus presuming a problemless education and behaviour subordinated to human goals.

Key words: behaviour, dog, socialization, nervous system

INTRODUCTION

The animal behaviour is described as an entity of their reaction to the environment where the relationship among animals and between animals and men are realized /1/. The motivation of an animal, the dog in particular, to realize a given type of behaviour, depends on environmental factors, both external and internal /2/. Internal factors are two types. The first type is related to psychophysiology of animals, and the second – to the impairment of a specific endogenous energy that motivates the individual to act /3/. When the living organism is influenced by various environmental deviations compared to that is it accustomed to, its motivation for realization of a specific behavioural type is blocked. Therefore, the

environmental factors are essential with regard to positive or negative behavioural patterns in animals as well as for the extent of their adaptation /4/. The existing relationship between temperament type and socialization is not less important for the adequate development of relationships between man and dog and between dogs, i.e. for formation of a behavior, subordinated to the intentions of men /5/.

Socialization has always interested ethologists /2, 3, 4, 5/, as in their opinion the successful socialization of puppies through proper education (depending on the individual temperament type) was the factor that predetermined the formation of behaviour.

The behaviour of the adult dog indicates whether the process of socialization is successful or not in a given animal /6/. In general, the adaptation of the puppy to its environment occurs between the 3rd week and the 3rd month of life.

It is emphasized /2, 3, 4/ that in many instances, this process is not successful

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because of the lack of information from the part of the man. Thus, the education of the dog is not satisfactory and do not satisfy the needs of man. That is why, the detailed investigation of the socialization of the puppy is essential, with emphasis on the relationship between the types of temperament, socialization of behaviour formation /7/.

In dogs, four temperament types are described /6/:

1. L (leader) – : strong, leader type;
2. F (feal) – strong, loyal, obedient but also emotional type;
3. G (glace) – weak, : indifferent, insensitive type,
4. A (asocial) – weak, asocial, prone to fear but sometimes to aggression.

If a parallel between canine and human temperaments (also four) is performed, the following correlations should be present /6/:

Dog Man

Type L (both genders) and type F (males) in dogs = Sanguine type in man;

Type F (both genders) in dogs = Choleric type in man;

Type F (female) and type G (males) = Phlegmatic type in man'

Type G (both genders) and type A (both genders) in dogs = Melancholic type in man

Here arises the question which of existing tests determines most precisely the temperament type in puppies with regard to their socialization and training.

The investigations in available literature on the application of the test of /6/ were scarce and that is why we aimed to use this test to study the relationship between the three components: temperament, socialization and behaviour formation in Doberman and German Doggie puppies.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The experimental research was performed for 4 days during the month of June, 2008. Ten privately-owned puppies, from the German Doggie and Doberman breeds, were used as test subjects, 5 of each breed. We followed the conditions for performing the tests strictly /6/. The puppies were 8 months old and kept in a specifically prepared empty room (10 m²),

sufficiently unfamiliar and away from the place they are usually kept. There were 3 wooden chairs, arranged in a circle, as well as a dog plush toy (able to move its tail and legs, making noises, but without smell) in the room. We placed the toy within 3 meters from the chairs, and after that each puppy was left alone in the room for 10 minutes (phase A), and than for 10 more minutes together with one of the researchers (phase B). We observed carefully the reactions of puppies, and in order to facilitate their recording and description, we designated the dogs as follows:

- Doberman breed – puppies No. No. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5;

- German Dogue breed - puppies No. No. 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

The puppies were taken away from the litter and returned after the end of the study. Each animal was tested separately, twice, at 2-day interval. The whole test environment was arranged in accordance with the requirements for humane treatment of test animals, as well as with zoo hygienic regulations for these species and categories of dogs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results we got allowed us to determine the type of nervous system for the puppies from both breeds, and also analyze their socializing and predict their behavior in the future.

Puppies No 1 and No 4 had the same reaction in both phases A and B. They backed off and ran away from the toy, contrary to our expectations. This is what we observed during the first 3 minutes, after which the animals remained at unease (they whimpered quietly) and kept their distance from the toy – 2 meters away from it and the chairs. They did not show any interest towards those objects. During the last 3 minutes, the puppies barked in a threatening manner. The described behaviour (fear and threat) led us to determine them to have a **type A** temperament, i. e. asocial animals, which would have difficulties in establishing relations with humans or other dogs (harder to socialize). They would not be

suitable for keeping inside apartments, or it would only be possible through rigorous training, especially during the socialization period.

Puppy No 2 exhibited the same reaction in both stages – it attacked, pushed and bit the toy all the time – an example of a rebellious or “dangerous” dog. Based on the observed behaviour, we determined it to have a **type F** temperament. Such dogs are efficient and loyal guards, but their socialization is difficult and requires intense training.

Puppies No 3 and No 5 in phase A spent the whole time (10 minutes) in exhibiting curiosity towards the toy and the chairs. They approached the objects, sniffed them, examined them, but they did not bite or bark. We observed the same behaviour in phase B, and this time the puppies were courageous enough, for 3 minutes, to push the toy towards the present researcher. According to their behaviour, we determined they had a **type L** temperament – they are balanced, calm, capable of being leaders. They can easily be trained due to the ease with which they adapt to the environment, which makes them suitable for guards or other social activities.

Puppies No 6, 8 and 9 were calm and curious throughout phase A. They were not annoyed by the toy and the chairs, but examined them and walked around them. During the last 2 minutes, however, puppy No 9 started barking at the toy for reasons unknown (the toy stood 1 metre away from it). The other 2 puppies were annoyed by puppy No 9 and also started barking at the toy. This contradictory behaviour led us to determine them as belonging to **type F** temperament i. e. they are calm and balanced but can also be strongly irritable. This character makes them difficult to train, though they still can be used for social activities.

Puppy No 7, in phase A exhibited an interesting behaviour. On seeing the toy dog, it would run away and hide behind one of the chairs. It stayed there throughout the test period. In phase B, a change was observed. During the first 6 minutes, the puppy stayed hidden behind the chair, and in the following 4 minutes it hesitantly tried to approach the toy, as if encouraged by the present

researcher. This behaviour indicates that the puppy is fearful and it has difficulties trusting or socializing. Therefore, we determined it has a **type G** temperament. Such puppies are hard to train, yet a dedicated trainer can achieve excellent results.

Puppy No 10 demonstrated a calm demeanor in phase A. From the very start of the test it approached the toy, pushed it gently and sniffed it without barking. We also observed that in the cases when the toy would get into physical contact with the researcher (as if it hits them), the puppy would retreat and hide under one of the chairs, which, according to /6/ and our team as well, means that it would be able to efficiently defend itself. In the specific case, it threatened the toy by pushing it, followed by defensive retreat under one of the chairs. Such a dog is gifted to be a leader and would be easy to train and socialize. We determined it has a **type L** temperament.

The exhibited behavioral reactions of the puppies from the German Dogue and Doberman breeds, confirmed the relationship between the type of nervous system, socializing and behavior development /1, 4, 5/. The results justified the testing of these animals during the process of their adaptation (socialization), as this allowed us to determine how best to work with them, and what kind of training they would need to form their overall behavior. Undoubtedly, it would be easiest to socialize the puppies with **types L** and **F** temperaments. It is faster and more effective, compared to the training of those with **types G** and **A** nervous system. We formulated this conclusion based on the studies of a number of authors /6, 7, 8, 9, 10/. If we approach the issue from a more commercial perspective we will conclude that when people choose a dog to buy, they would logically prefer the “sanguine” and “choleric” temperament types – i.e. types L and F.

In conclusion, in order for us to be able to determine a puppy’s socializing, training, and future behavior, we should test them.

Having information on the type of nervous system and the puppies’ socialization, we can predict the future development of these animals.

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