- Thought depends in various ways on languages
- Language depends in various ways on thought
- They are two independent systems

- **Behaviorist proposal**
  - Claimed that thought and language are identical
  - When we are thinking, we are talking to ourselves (absurd)
  - The behaviorists believed that thought consists only of covert speech and other implicit motor actions, but evidence has shown that thought can proceed in the absence of any motor activity

- **Linguistic determinism**
  - **Linguistic determinism** is the claim that language determines or strongly influences the way that a person thinks or perceives the world
  - Benjamin Whorf
    - Believed that these emphases in language must have a great influence on the way that speakers of that language think about the world
    - He claimed that Eskimos have many different words for snow (each refers to snow in a different state), whereas English speakers have one word for snow
      - In truth, Inuit languages have about as many words for snow as the English does
    - English speakers have 11 basic color words
      - Language of the Dani (Indonesian New Guinea) has 2 basic color terms: mili for dark, mola for bright and cold hues
      - If the categories in language determine perception, the Dani should perceive color in a less refined manner than English speakers
      - If the capacity for identifying focal colors developed because English speakers have special words for these colors, then it would be a case of language influencing thought
      - Both English and Dani speakers found it easier to learn arbitrary names for focal colors than for nonfocal colors
  - **Influence of language on ability to remember colors**
    - Compared Berinmo speakers with English speakers
    - Superior memory for focal colors regardless of language
    - English speakers found it easiest to sort stimuli at yellow-green boundary while Berinmo speakers found it easiest to sort at nol-wor distribution
  - Language can influence thought, but it does not totally determine the types of concepts that we can think about

- **Does language depend on thought?**
  - A lot of evidence to suggest thought occurs before ability to use language
  - Many species without language appear to be capable of complex cognition
    - Children are an example of this too
  - If thought came first, then language arose as a tool whose function was to communicate thought
  - The human visual system is maximally sensitive to certain colors