- 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 (Irian Jaya, 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

**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