

## **Baby Steps at the Tree Nursery**

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The meaning first approach hypothesizes that humans can form complex non-linguistic representations in an 'Language of Thought' independent of any external language used in communication (Sauerland & Alexiadou 2020, *Frontiers in Psychology*). Since the Language of Thought and external languages nevertheless seem closely related, one research program is to reverse engineer the Language of Thought from external languages. Three plausible components of the Language of Thought are logical conjunction, a part-whole relationship and an efficiency requirement excluding redundancies. I show that several universal structural properties of external languages follow from these three components.