

Abstract:

A compelling, and popular, thought is that ability entails control: S's being able to ϕ entails that ϕ be, in some sense, in S's control. This intuition is inconsistent with a different thought that many have found compelling: that S's actually ϕ -ing entails that S is able to ϕ . In this paper, I introduce a new form of evidence to help adjudicate between these two theses: probability judgments about ability ascriptions. I argue that these judgments provide evidence in favor of the intuition that success entails ability, and against the intuition that ability requires control. Moreover, I argue that these judgments support one particular analysis which vindicates the success intuition, namely, the analysis of ability in terms of conditionals.