Notes on Intentionality and Human Action

1. We need the following notions to understand intentional states such as beliefs and desires: propositional content and psychological mode, \( S(p) \) and in some cases \( S(n) \), Direction of fit, and conditions of satisfaction. For some types of intentionality we need also causal self referentiality. The general claim is that intentional states where the direction of fit is upward or downward are representations of their conditions of satisfaction. What about cases where the fit is presupposed, is not upward or downward, like the emotions? These contain combinations of beliefs and desires, which do have an upward or downward direction of fit. So the general claim is that intentionality is a matter of representation of conditions of satisfaction.

2. Action contains some special features. First we need a distinction between prior intentions and intentions-in-action. Why? Because the conditions of satisfaction are different. The prior intention represents the whole action. The intention in action represents only the bodily movement. What is the connection? The whole action consists of the intention in action plus the bodily movement, where the intention in action has to cause the bodily movement if the intention in action is to be satisfied. So the whole picture looks like this:

   The whole action

Prior intention causes \( \rightarrow \) (intention-in-a action causes \( \rightarrow \) Bodily Movement)

3. Complex actions have an inner structure. This structure is represented in the conditions the satisfaction of the complex intention. The these structures are of two types, the causal by-means-of relation and the constitutive by-way-of relation

Causal example: I fire the gun by means of pulling the trigger

   i.a causes \( \rightarrow \) trigger pulls him causes \( \rightarrow \) gun fires.

Constitutive by-way-of relation: I vote by way of raising my arm.

i.a. causes \( \rightarrow \) arm goes up: Counts as: voting

To understand the structure of complex acts we need the notions of the accordion effect and basic actions.