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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF HUMAN FEEDBACK AND AI FEEDBACK GRAMMATIC STRUCTURE

Normamatova Zakhro Dilshodovna
English Teacher; Karshi,Kashkadarya;
Tel: +998979661997;
e-mail: zakhronormamatova97@icloud.com;

Abstract
This artucle explores the grammatical characteristics of feedback provided by human instructors versus artificial intelligence (AI) systems, with a particular focus on sentence structure, modality, tone, and complexity. Drawing from a corpus of real-world feedback samples from classrooms and language learning platforms (such as ChatGPT and Grammarly), the research analyzes structural tendencies, identifies syntactic patterns, and evaluates the communicative effectiveness of each source. While human feedback tends to favor elliptical, affective, and context-aware constructions, AI feedback is marked by consistency, completeness, and formal syntax. This contrast reflects not only grammatical structure but also deeper cognitive and pragmatic differences between human and machine-generated language. The study aims to contribute to the growing field of AI-mediated education by providing linguistic insights into the feedback dynamic.

Keywords: AI feedback, human feedback, grammar, sentence structure, modality, tone, syntax, educational technology, language learning, communication

1. Introduction

Feedback is a fundamental component of teaching and learning. It helps learners recognize errors, improve their understanding, and build metacognitive awareness. With the growing integration of artificial intelligence into educational

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systems, a new form of feedback has emerged: AI-generated feedback. Unlike traditional feedback given by human instructors, AI feedback is generated through algorithms, trained language models, and automated grammar-checking systems.

The goal of this study is to conduct a comparative analysis of the grammatical structure of human versus AI feedback. How do these two types of feedback differ in sentence formation, syntactic style, tone, and grammatical constructions? What patterns can we observe in terms of mood, voice, complexity, or use of cohesive devices?

This analysis draws on grammatical theory (Quirk et al., 1985; Halliday, 1994) and integrates insights from computational linguistics and language pedagogy.

2. Theoretical Background

The study is grounded in the following linguistic and pedagogical theories:

Systemic Functional Grammar (Halliday, 1994): Focuses on how grammatical choices reflect functions such as giving information or expressing judgment.

Discourse Grammar (Heine & Kuteva, 2007): Analyzes how grammar is used across larger stretches of discourse, such as feedback.

AI Language Modeling (Vaswani et al., 2017; Brown et al., 2020): Examines how transformer-based models (e.g., ChatGPT) generate syntactic structures.

Error Correction and Feedback Theory (Ellis, 2009): Highlights how different types of feedback (e.g., direct, indirect, metalinguistic) serve different instructional purposes.

Understanding grammatical patterns in feedback is key for evaluating their pedagogical clarity, formality, and affective value.

3. Methodology

This study employs qualitative and corpus-based analysis using two datasets:

Human feedback corpus: 120 written comments from language teachers correcting ESL student essays.

AI feedback corpus: 120 written feedback comments generated by ChatGPT and Grammarly on the same essays.

Each feedback instance was analyzed for:

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Sentence length and type (simple, compound, complex)
Voice (active/passive)
Mood (indicative, imperative, interrogative)
Use of modals and hedging devices
Lexico-grammatical patterns (use of pronouns, cohesive devices)

4. Sentence Type and Structure

Human feedback often uses elliptical or fragmentary structures, especially in margin notes:
Good idea – clarify the second part.
Too vague. Add specific example.
In contrast, AI feedback consistently uses complete declarative sentences:
This sentence lacks clarity due to ambiguous pronoun reference.
Consider adding a specific example to strengthen your argument.
Example Comparison:
Human: Rephrase for clarity.
AI: This sentence could be rephrased to enhance clarity and readability.
This highlights the economy and efficiency of human grammar versus the completeness and formality of AI grammar.

5. Mood and Modality

Human feedback uses a mixture of imperatives and modals with interpersonal tone:
Try using the past tense here.
You might want to avoid repetition.
AI feedback, however, tends toward modal-heavy, hedged constructions:
It may be helpful to vary your sentence structure.
You could consider restructuring this paragraph for better coherence.
AI feedback avoids direct commands. This suggests a design preference for politeness and formality, often following Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness principles.
Example:
Human: Use a stronger verb.

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AI: You might consider replacing this verb with a more specific alternative.

6. Passive and Active Voice

Human feedback generally uses the active voice, often with the second person subject:

You missed the article here.

You repeated the same idea.

AI feedback frequently uses the passive voice, especially in Grammarly-style platforms:

The article "the" is missing before the noun.

The same idea has been repeated in this paragraph.

This structural choice reflects a tendency toward objective tone in AI-generated content, while human feedback leans toward personal engagement.

7. Complexity and Clause Usage

AI feedback exhibits a high degree of syntactic complexity, favoring relative clauses and embedded structures:

The sentence, which begins with a subordinate clause, may confuse readers unfamiliar with this topic.

Human feedback is more paratactic and segmented:

Too long. Split into two sentences.

Hard to follow. Check punctuation.

Example:

Human: Revise this. It's awkward.

AI: This sentence structure appears awkward and could benefit from rephrasing to enhance flow.

8. Tone and Personalization

Humans frequently use affective language and tone-shaping devices:

Nice use of contrast!

Great start, but the ending needs work.

AI is more neutral, often lacking emotional evaluation:

The transition between paragraphs could be improved.

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Some advanced AI systems (e.g., ChatGPT) are capable of mimicking praise or encouragement:
Good job introducing the topic! You may want to elaborate further in the body.
Still, tone management in AI is largely algorithmic and lacks genuine human intuition.

9. Cohesive Devices and Referencing

AI-generated feedback uses more explicit referencing and cohesive devices:
This paragraph lacks a clear topic sentence, which helps the reader understand the main idea.
Human feedback assumes shared context, resulting in shorter referential chains:
Add a topic sentence.
Clarify this part.
The difference stems from the AI's need to compensate for lack of shared memory, whereas humans rely on interactional history.

10. Discussion

The contrast between human and AI feedback reflects underlying grammatical and communicative logics:
AI prioritizes completeness, formality, and syntactic balance.
Humans prioritize clarity, personalization, and interactional relevance.
While both forms have instructional value, their grammatical structures affect how feedback is perceived and internalized by learners. AI grammar is more suited for standardized feedback, whereas human grammar excels in adaptive, context-rich interaction.

11. Conclusion

The grammatical structure of human and AI feedback reveals differing approaches to clarity, tone, and educational intent. AI systems generate well-formed, polite, and grammatically complete sentences but may lack contextual sensitivity and emotional resonance. Human feedback, while often fragmentary or informal, offers more targeted and personalized language.

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Understanding these structural differences helps educators integrate both sources effectively in blended learning environments. Future work should explore how learners interpret and respond to each style of grammar in feedback.

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