

3.2. Types of Errors Students Wanted to Have Corrected

Section C of the questionnaire addressed research question 2: *What are the students' general preferences for classroom error correction of different types of errors (e.g., pronunciation and grammar)?* The students were asked how often they wanted classroom error correction of different types of errors: grammatical and phonological errors, as well as errors in vocabulary, pragmatics, and discourse. Instead of the term phonology, the words “pronunciation, accent, and intonation,” were used in the questionnaire. Errors in pragmatics were presented as “inappropriate expressions,” and discourse errors as “organization of discourse.”⁶ Participants rated each item on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 representing *never* and 5 representing *always* with respect to frequency of correction. As can be seen in Table 3, grammatical errors ranked first in order of preference for correction, closely followed by vocabulary errors. The majority of the students wanted to have their grammatical and vocabulary errors corrected *always*. Errors in pragmatics ranked after vocabulary errors. The students wanted to have their discourse errors and phonological errors corrected less often than the other types of errors.

Table 3. Types of Errors Students Wanted to Have Corrected

ITEM	N	NEVER					MEAN
		1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	
GRAMMAR	249		0.8	6.4	29.7	63.1	4.55
VOCABULARY	247		2.0	6.1	34.0	57.9	4.48
PRAGMATICS	249	1.2	3.6	15.3	36.7	43.1	4.17
DISCOURSE	249	2.0	4.1	22.1	40.2	31.6	3.95
PHONOLOGY	249	1.2	7.2	24.5	32.1	34.9	3.92

Note: Some rows do not add to 100% due to rounding.

A number of foreign language educators have suggested that errors that impede the intelligibility of a message should receive the highest attention for correction (e.g., Burt and Kiparsky 1974:78, Hanzeli 1975:431). What type of errors do interfere with communication? This question remains unresolved. Studies on comprehensibility of errors have provided a variety of conflicting results. For example, Olsson (1972) found that,