Corrective feedback: 'Prompts' better than 'recasts', and 'recasts' better than 'ignoring error'

Many studies have been carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of different corrective feedback strategies in the L2 classroom. When a pupil makes an error in the oral L2 production in class the teacher is faced with a number of choices. The teacher can,

1.   recast it

2.   give an elicitation prompt

3.   repeat the error

4.   seek clarification

5.   recast and continue not waiting for the pupil to correct

6.   ignore the error

Gattullo (2000, p. 300) used categories 1-5 above to analyse data in a study of teacher feedback in a foreign language teaching setting in Italian primary schools. She classifies elicitation, repetition of error and clarification request (categories 2,3 and 4 above) as falling under "negotiation of form" type of feedback.

1. Recast after a pupil's error

Pupil 4:   I'm doctor

Teacher: You're the doctor (recast)

Pupil 5:   I'm patient

Teacher: I'm the patient (recast). All right

2. Elicitation after a pupil's error

Teacher: Eh, Giorgio, what do you do in your free time?

Pupil: volleyball

Teacher: you? (elicitation)

3. Repetition of error after a pupil's error

Teacher: What colour is this?

Pupil 1:   This is a green

Teacher: WHAT? this is A green? (repetition of error)

4. Clarification request after a pupil's error

Teacher: What colour is this?

Pupil: This is a brown

Teacher: I can't understand. What colour is this? (clarification
           request)

5. **Teacher's continuation after feedback**

Teacher: Do you like ice-cream? What kind do you like best?
           Mint?

Pupil: Doesn't like mint

Teacher: Don't you like mint? (recast) But do you like all the rest?
           (teacher's continuation)

A sixth category not included by Gattullo (2000) is where the teacher has
understood the utterance of the pupil and he/she ignores the error and
responds to the meaning of what the pupil has said as in the following
example:

6. **Teacher ignores the error**

Teacher: What colour is this?

Pupil 1:   This is a green

Teacher: Okay, can you show me a red one? (teacher's
           continuation)

In summary then, a teacher can react to a pupil's incorrect utterance by
ignoring it and giving no feedback, by explicitly correcting it, or by
prompting the student in some way that an error has been made and the
teacher would like the utterance to be rephrased. Research studies
conducted on corrective feedback with L2 learners indicate that prompts
are more effective than recasts in enabling learners to acquire the form
that caused the error. Recasts in turn have been shown to be more
effective than providing no corrective feedback.

3.2   CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) has been defined as
a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used
for the learning and teaching of both content and language (Coyle, Hood, &
Marsh, 2010, p. 1). CLIL is also described as 'content–based
instruction' in the North American context (Brinton, Snow &
Wesche, 2003). Much of the underlying theory for CLIL draws on
the research from immersion education (Cable et al., 2010). Irish–
medium education is a form of immersion education that has a long