Strategies to develop speaking skill in esp multilevel classroom

It is a well known fact that the best results in learning a foreign language are achieved through constant and active involvement. But how to create such an ideal classroom environment in a multilevel ESP group where quite a number of language learners are of elementary level, if so? You can hardly imagine most of the students being able to participate in the simplest speaking activities, but this, in its turn, is the final goal of the whole learning process as being the most adequate reflection of learners' abilities to be effective language communicators.

In this respect every teacher, working in such a multilevel group, has to be very creative as to the choice and development of the strategies which can help to encourage and stimulate the lower level students to active participation. Each stage of a speaking stimulation activity must be thoroughly planned and provided with supporting materials, specially developed with taking into consideration the main barriers to successful foreign language learning. Among such barriers we can definitely mention the lack of practical skills to use language grammar structures, the lack of active vocabulary as well as insufficient and limited knowledge of speaking language models. The strategies, helping to overcome or at least lower such barriers, must lead a learner from the simplest text-based reproduction to more elaborate speaking activities. Among such strategies it is worth mentioning the following: 1) a list of special questions carefully covering the whole context; 2) a list of incomplete sentences which, being completed, reflect the whole context; 3) a gap-filled text with the possible variants given; 4) a supporting map of grammar structures, words and word combinations; 5) a set of pictures supported with necessary expressions to reflect the content; 6) a list of true and false statements, the latter being supposed to be corrected; 7) a map of dates and facts helping to recollect the content.

These strategies can be used effectively not only at the stage of 'from reading to speaking' but at the stage of learning 'from listening to speaking'. They can be efficient stimulators in the first steps to independent communication.