

Project Report

Region 3 Signature Project: "English for Fun" Phase 2

Samudradevi Balika Vidyalaya, Ambathale

Date: 10th October 2024

Organized by:

Lion Ladies Association of Lions International District 306 C1



Project Chairperson:
Lion Anul Wijenayake



Co-Chairpersons:
Lion Thushari Dissanayake



Co-Chairpersons:
Lion Rani Burah

Overview of the Project

The primary objective of the "**English for Fun**" project was to create a lively and enjoyable environment for children to learn English, encouraging them to develop a genuine interest in the language. This initiative reflects the Lion Ladies Association's commitment to improving educational standards and promoting literacy in underprivileged areas.

The event brought together **400 students and 35 teachers** from the school, all eager to participate in the various activities designed to improve their English language skills in an engaging and enjoyable way.

Profile of Resource Person: Madhubhashini Disanayaka Ratnayake

Madhubhashini Disanayaka Ratnayake is a highly respected Sri Lankan academic, author, and educator, renowned for her contributions to literature and English language education. She is the daughter of **Professor Emeritus J. B. Disanayaka**, a prominent figure in Sri Lankan linguistics, and was educated at **Ladies' College, Colombo**, where her passion for literature and writing was nurtured.

After completing her early education, Madhubhashini pursued her higher studies in India, earning a **Bachelor of Arts** degree from the **University of Allahabad**. She later received a prestigious **Fulbright Scholarship** to pursue a **Master's degree in American and English Literature** at the renowned **New York University**, further solidifying her academic credentials and expertise in the field.

Literary Contributions

Madhubhashini's literary journey has been marked by numerous acclaimed works, ranging from novels to short stories, radio plays, and children's stories. Her writing often delves into deep human emotions and complex relationships, and she has gained widespread recognition for her impactful storytelling.

Notable Works Include:

- **Novels:**
 - *There is Something I Have to Tell You* (2011): This novel won the **Gratiaen Prize**, Sri Lanka's most prestigious literary award, and is one of her most celebrated works.
- **Short Stories:**
 - *Driftwood* (1990): Winner of the **State Literary Award** for Best Collection of Short Stories in English.
 - *Tales of Shades and Shadow* (2001): Shortlisted for the **Gratiaen Prize**.
 - *A Strange Tale of Love* (2004): Also shortlisted for the **Gratiaen Prize**.
- **Radio Plays:**

- *Voices from Afar*: A notable work in radio playwriting.
- **Children's Stories:**
 - *Raththa*
 - *Animal Tales*
- **Non-Fiction:**
 - *Contemporary Sinhala Fiction*: A critical exploration of modern Sinhala literature.

Awards and Honors

Madhubhashini has received numerous awards and accolades for her literary achievements, including:

- **2011 Gratiaen Prize**, winner for *There is Something I Have to Tell You*.
- **2004 Gratiaen Prize**, shortlist for *A Strange Tale of Love*.
- **2001 Gratiaen Prize**, shortlist for *Tales of Shades and Shadow*.
- **1990 State Literary Award**, Best Collection of Short Stories in English for *Driftwood*.

Current Role

In addition to her work as an author, Madhubhashini is the **Head of the English Language Department** at the **University of Sri Jayewardenepura**, where she continues to inspire and educate students. Her dedication to promoting the English language and her remarkable contributions to Sri Lankan literature make her a leading figure in both academia and the literary world.

Her involvement in initiatives such as the **"English for Fun" project** underscores her passion for fostering a love of learning and literature among young students, making her a perfect resource person for such endeavors.

Project Highlights: Region 3 "English for Fun" Phase 2 at Samudradevi Balika Vidyalaya

The "English for Fun" Phase 2 project, organized by the Lion Ladies Association of Lions International District 306 C1, successfully brought together students, teachers, and key members of the community to promote English education in an engaging and interactive manner. Below are the key highlights of this impactful event:

1. Chief Guest

The event was honored by the presence of **District Governor Lion Saman Jinadasa MJF MAF** and **First Lady Lion Limali Jinadasa**, who were the chief guests. Both expressed their enthusiasm for the project and commended the efforts of the Lion Ladies Association in supporting the education of young children. Lion Saman Jinadasa acknowledged the importance of early

English education in a global context and emphasized the lasting impact of such initiatives on future generations. His encouraging words motivated both the organizers and participants to continue fostering a love for learning in creative ways.

2. Project Leadership

The success of the "English for Fun" Phase 2 project was largely attributed to the strong leadership provided by **Lion Anul Wijenayake**, the project chairperson, who coordinated the event with remarkable precision and care. She was ably supported by **Lion Thushari Dissanayake** and **Lion Rani Burah**, who served as co-chairpersons. Their dedication and meticulous planning ensured the smooth execution of the event, from the initial preparation to the final wrap-up.

The leadership team worked closely with the school administration, resource persons, and volunteers to ensure that all aspects of the event were carefully managed. Their collaborative approach allowed for seamless coordination of logistics, donations, and activities, and they ensured that the event's objectives were achieved within the planned timeline and budget.

3. Resource Person: Madhubhashini Disanayaka Ratnayake

A key highlight of the project was the involvement of the esteemed academic and author, Prof. **Madhubhashini Disanayaka Ratnayake**, as the resource person. With her vast experience in teaching English and her notable contributions to Sri Lankan literature, Prof. Madhubhashini played an integral role in making the project both educational and entertaining for the students.

She led interactive sessions aimed at engaging **Grade 1 to 5 students** in fun and imaginative ways to learn English. Her teaching style, infused with storytelling and creative activities, captivated the children's attention and made language learning a joyous experience. Prof. Madhubhashini's session included reading from her children's books and conducting storytelling exercises, allowing the students to participate actively. Her efforts were aimed at building not only language skills but also confidence in using English in everyday communication.

The involvement of a figure as prominent as Prof. Madhubhashini helped elevate the project's profile and emphasized the importance of education through interactive and non-traditional methods. She also shared her personal experiences and journey in mastering English, inspiring both students and teachers.

4. Project Activities

- **Donation to Junior Library:** A total of **LKR 28,280 worth of English storybooks** were donated to the junior library of Samudradevi Balika Vidyalaya. This contribution will benefit future generations of students, providing them with access to high-quality reading materials to develop their language skills.

- **Lunch for Participants:** To ensure the well-being of all attendees, lunch was provided for **400 students** and **35 teachers** who participated in the project. The provision of a healthy meal during the event helped create a warm and welcoming environment, contributing to the success of the project.
- **Personalized Storybook Gifts:** Every student who participated in the event received a **personalized English storybook** as a gift, encouraging them to continue reading and learning English at home. This gesture added a personal touch to the project and served as a lasting reminder of the day's activities.

5. Impact and Future Outlook

The "English for Fun" Phase 2 project made a significant impact on the students of Samudradevi Balika Vidyalaya by introducing them to English language learning in a way that was enjoyable and accessible. The project not only provided educational resources but also ignited the students' interest in language learning through interactive storytelling and engaging activities.

The event has set the stage for future projects aimed at further enhancing English literacy among young learners in the region. With the continued support of District Governor Lion Saman Jinadasa and the leadership of Lion Anul Wijenayake and her team, the Lion Ladies Association is poised to expand this initiative to other schools, reaching even more children and fostering a love for the English language.

In conclusion, the Region 3 "English for Fun" Phase 2 project was a resounding success, thanks to the collaborative efforts of the organizing team, the leadership of the Lions Club, the expertise of the resource person, and the enthusiastic participation of the students and teachers. The initiative is a testament to the Lions' ongoing commitment to supporting education and empowering the next generation with essential language skills.





