

## **Humour as a Technique for Teaching EFL Vocabulary at Intermediate Level**

Asst. Prof . Ziyad Fadhil Himood

Abeer Saad Abdul – Ghanee

*Dep. of English*

*Directorate of Nineveh Education*

*College of Basic Education*

*Ministry of Education*

*University of Mosul, Iraq*

*Nineveh Education, Iraq*

(received in 16\12\2018., accepted in 7\1\2019)

**Abstract:** Humour benefits vary through its usage in different fields, particularly in education. It increases pupils' ability and performance, creates an open classroom for the pupils to participate, and facilitates their learning. The study tries to investigate the effect of using humour as a technique in teaching, on improving the pupils' ability in terms of learning, retaining and recalling of the new vocabularies for a long period of time. It is hypothesized that there is a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental group in the learning, retaining and recalling of new English vocabularies.

**Keywords:** Humour, sense of humour, humorous riddles, vocabulary learning.

### **الفكاهة ك تقنية في تدريس مفردات اللغة الإنكليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية للمرحلة المتوسطة**

**الملخص:** تتنوع فوائد الفكاهة من خلال استخداماتها في مختلف المجالات، وبالتحديد في مجال التعليم حيث تزيد من قابلية الطلاب وأدائهم وتخلق جو مريح ليتمكن الطلاب من المشاركة في الصف وتسهيل عملية تعلمهم. حيث تحاول الدراسة التحقق من تأثير استخدام الفكاهة ك تقنية في مجال التدريس، لتحسين قابلية الطلاب في التعلم والحفظ وتذكر المفردات لفترة زمنية أطول من خلال استخدام هذه التقنية الجديدة. حيث افترضت الدراسة انه يوجد فرق دال احصائي بين المجموعة الضابطة والمجموعة التجريبية في التعلم والحفظ وتذكر واستعادة المفردات الإنكليزية الجديدة.

## **Section One**

### **Introduction**

This section introduces the problem of the study, aim of the study, hypotheses of the study, value of the study, and limits of the study, humour as a pedagogical tool in EFL classroom, importance of vocabulary learning, memory and vocabulary learning, and mnemonics.

#### **1.1 Background:**

Vocabulary teaching is one of the vital materials of language teaching. It is a powerful carrier of meaning through which we express our ideas, feeling, and perceptions. Vocabulary teaching is not an easy task. The motivation of the pupils in the process of expanding knowledge in the target language is important, since, it has been observed that many pupils gradually lose their concern and motivation to learning during the year courses.

Recently vocabulary researchers' main interest and concern are to find out answers for the following questions:

-What are the most effective and attractive techniques for vocabulary teaching?

- How can a teacher make the foreign language learner obtain a relatively rich vocabulary?

- Are the traditional techniques for teaching vocabulary still effective?

- How can we motivate pupils to respond for an innovative teaching method, strategy and technique?

- What are the best means for the acquisition, retention and recalling of new words?

Richard (1985, cited in Tezi, 2008: 4) indicates that “we must look to how teaching techniques can help realize our concept of what it means to know a word”. Similarly, Nation (2002cited in McBain, 2011, N.P) mentions that “teachers should also know how to present the words in a way that will be easy for the pupils to remember the words in a better way”. A lot of researchers in this respect argue that the use of humour as a technique in classroom effectively facilitates the learning, retaining and recalling of vocabulary. It is quite noticeable that many English language learners at all educational levels soon forget the vocabularies they have learned while dealing with the different activities related to their studying materials. Pupils

at the intermediate level form no exception in this respect. They face difficulty in retaining and duly recalling the vocabularies presented to them by their teachers. People to whom this matter is of much concern claim that the techniques used to present the new vocabularies may be not effective. Such claims are waiting to be proved hypothetically. Hence, the current study puts forward the humour technique as a suggested technique that may contribute to a better learning, retaining and recalling of the English vocabularies of the intermediate pupils.

This study tries to provide answers to the following research questions:

- 1- Does teaching EFL vocabulary for 1<sup>st</sup> intermediate pupils through humorous riddles have significant effect on the acquisition and learning abilities?
- 2- Does teaching EFL vocabulary for 1<sup>st</sup> intermediate pupils through humorous riddles have significant effect on the retention and recalling abilities?

The study aims to investigate experimentally the effect of using humour as a technique on the learning, retaining and recalling vocabularies of the 1<sup>st</sup> intermediate pupils.

## **1.2 Hypotheses:**

Based on the above-mentioned aims, the study hypothesizes the following:

- 1- There is a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental group as far as the acquisition of new English vocabularies using the humour technique is concerned.
- 2- There is a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental group as far as the retention and recalling of new English vocabularies using the humour technique is concerned.

## **1.3 Limits of the Research**

The study is limited in its scope to investigate the humorous technique of teaching EFL vocabularies using humorous riddles at 1st Intermediate pupils in the city of Mosul during the second term of the academic year (2017 – 2018).

## **1.4 Humour as a Pedagogical Tool in EFL Classroom**

Humour is authentic and humanly necessary as the need to communicate, as with other different aspects of our lives.

Chiasson (2008: 3) argues that humour must not be neglected however rather making it a part of learning process in everyday classes. Faulkner (2011: 6) states that humour as “any physical action or spoken statement intentionally or otherwise that causes pupils to react by laughing, giggling, smiling, etc.”

The use of humour doesn't mean that the learners and the teachers have to be comedian. As Tosta (2001: 27) confirms, a funny teacher is not a clown figure, but a serious conscientious professional who believes in the meaning fullness and effectiveness of having fun while learning and making clear-cut distinction. Using humorous texts is used to promote language learning and to boost student participation in classroom activities. In spite of many researches on the role of humour in the L2 classroom, the result of several meta-analyses of the field of humour and teaching (Martin et al., 2006) grievously put, it has been difficult to connect the use of humour to increased learning as Martin et al. (2006: 305) explained: “Although pupils report enjoying learning and they report that they believe they have learned course material, objective measurements of the recall associated with humorous lectures

are rather minuscule”. In some studies humour is found to promote a sense of immediacy and connection between teacher and pupils, to reduce anxiety, and to increase enjoyment of and interest in the class( Wanzer & Frymier, 1999: 49).

### **1.5 Importance of Vocabulary Learning**

Vocabulary plays an important communication, as communication between people would be stopped if one of them cannot convey his or her message effectively or express his or her ideas meaningfully whether in oral and written forms. This problem is due to lack of vocabulary knowledge.

Vocabulary learning has long been considered one of the fundamental components for developing language learning. Vocabulary learning and teaching are two significant issues in EFL for both teachers and learners.

Schmitt (2010: 4) claims that “one thing that all of the partners involved in the learning process (pupils, teachers, materials writers, and researchers) can agree upon is that learning vocabulary is an essential part of mastering a second language”.

In recent years, interest in vocabulary in teaching by methodologists and linguists has been increased. Harmer

(1991: 153) points out that “if language structures make up the Skelton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh”. Thus, language cannot be learnt without vocabulary, it has an important value in language teaching.

As far as the positive role of using humour in teaching vocabulary is concerned, Bell (2009) Necss (2009) and Schmitz (2002) assert in their studies that ‘humour can facilitate language teaching and learning including Vocabulary acquisition’. Moreover, when pupils learn new vocabulary through humour, they are more likely to remember them better than learn as single items and they get a much better picture of what the words mean. On their parts, Garner (2006) and (Matthews, 2011) report that humour in deed encouraged memory retentions among learners.

## **1.6 Memory and Vocabulary learning**

Lack of vocabulary knowledge is one of the biggest problems facing foreign language learners since learning vocabulary is very important at all stages because foreign language learners rely heavily on vocabulary knowledge.

As far as memory is concerned, learning a foreign language basically depends on memorizing as many vocabularies as possible and using them continuously. Baddeley (1999:17) divides memory into:

### **a. Sensory memory:**

It refers to the role of storage in the processes involved in perception, with the term iconic memory referring to visual sensory memory, and echoic memory to its auditory equivalent.

### **b. Short –term or working memory:**

The term working memory is used rather than short-term memory to describe the memory system that allows manipulating stored information.

### **c. Long-term memory:**

Long-term memory refers to more durable encoding and storage system, in this kind of memory the essential concern is storing information. Unlike sensory memory and short-term memory in which the storage is an incidental feature of the other aspects of the system, also this memory has an enormous capacity (ibid: 14).

### **1.7 The impact of humour on memory:**

Many researchers tell that learning through humour is very effective and such learning is memorable for a long time (Naidu, 2014:209). Due to its numerous benefits, research on humour has been varied. The effect of humour on learning and memory has been specific interest to psychologists.

Garner (2006:179) concludes that “humour has a positive effect on student enjoyment and content retention, and they feel relaxed in the classroom because humour creates a comfortable atmosphere that increased student’s assimilation of information”. Schmidt (1994) discovers in his study that humorous sentences were better recalled by students than non-humorous ones. In addition, Atir (2010:22) states that humour can act as a strong retrieval cue, because firstly, humorous information is remembered better, thus becoming an efficient cue and secondly, it activates deeper processing which leads to a stronger association between the humorous content and the material that has to be remembered. So, one of the psychological benefits of humour is that

humour elicits positive feelings it could be assumed that only people in a positive mood state would encode or recall the target event Dzulkifli & Tunku Badli (2013:252).

Thus, this study indicates that the more the students are interacting with the humorous riddle the faster they arrive at the correct answer. The humour technique works on motivating the memory that helps them increasing their desire to learn. In other words, the better they interacts with the humorous riddle, the longer this vocabulary stay in their memory. The students were more interactive with these vocabularies that influenced on the stability and permanence of these vocabularies in their long-term memory that is the human being occasionally retrieves the deep influencing situations in his life when necessary. Also, humour works as mnemonics device serving to facilitate the ability to learn, memorize and retain new vocabularies.

## **Section Two (Literature review)**

## **2.1 Previous Studies:**

Zabidin (2015) conducted a study in Malaysia aimed to examine the effect (s) of using humorous texts on ESL learner's vocabulary comprehension and retention. Two intact groups of tertiary pupils were chosen in this study. The experimental group consisted of 9 males and 16 females while the control group is (8) males and (17) females. The two groups attended four reading sessions. In each reading session, the participants were given a vocabulary test (pre-test) before starting reading. The experimental group was taught using non-humorous text. After each reading session, the participants were given immediate vocabulary test (post-test 1). After a week, the participants were given delayed vocabulary test (post-test 2). After a week, two groups were given delayed vocabulary test (post-test 2). The participants scores gained in their post-test 1 to pre-test score were compared using the t-test as a statistical means. The findings showed that humour text could relatively impact word comprehension and retention.

Another study was conducted by Mahdiloo & Izadpanah (2017) which took place in Iran aimed to examine the effects of humorous movie clips on better learning of English language vocabulary.

(48) Intermediate language learners were chosen and randomly divided into two equal groups consisting of 24 pupils for the experimental group and 24 for the control group. 30-items and multiple choice vocabulary tests were adapted from PET test and scored out of 30. The experimental group watched the humorous movie clips while the control group were taught in a conventional way. After 10 sessions of treatment, both groups were tested on the similar items wrapped in the pre-test. The effect of humorous movie clips and the group's vocabulary achievement was evaluated through Paired Samples t-test analysis. The results showed that the experimental group performed better than the control group since humorous movies clips had a positive effect on developing vocabulary among intermediate EFL learners ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the experimental.

Whereas, some empirical studies have been shown that the use of humour had less impact on the acquisition of information and retention including- there is no any improvement on learning by using humour. For instance, Bryant, Brown, Silberberg, and Elliott (1981) reach at the conclusion that using humorous visual illustrations did not

have any impact on the acquisition of information. In addition, Fisher (1997) study showed that did not have any refinement in retention of material, this due to the fact that ‘the pacing of humour in the project was so fast and the visitors were exposed to humour too often’. In 2007, Houser et al, come up to the conclusion that although humour enhances student motivation, at the same time there are no any effects on information recall by using humour. Their conclusions can account for the inability of the earlier researchers to demonstrate the effectiveness of humour upon the process of learning. It follows from above that there is no based evidence on the effect of using humour on teaching or learning English as a foreign language. This paper is an attempt at investigating the significant difference between learning environments incorporating humour in teaching vocabularies for EFL learners and those that do not.

This study differs in terms of using the humorous (riddles) as a novel technique for better learning and retaining new vocabularies. It is the first experiment as far as public researchers are concerned. The experiment has been

conducted on the 1<sup>st</sup> intermediate female pupils. The function of these humorous (riddles) contributed in stimulating creative thinking and brainstorming, evoking the pupils’ memory through a logical deductive way of thinking. By doing so the targeted vocabulary would be kept for a longer period of time.

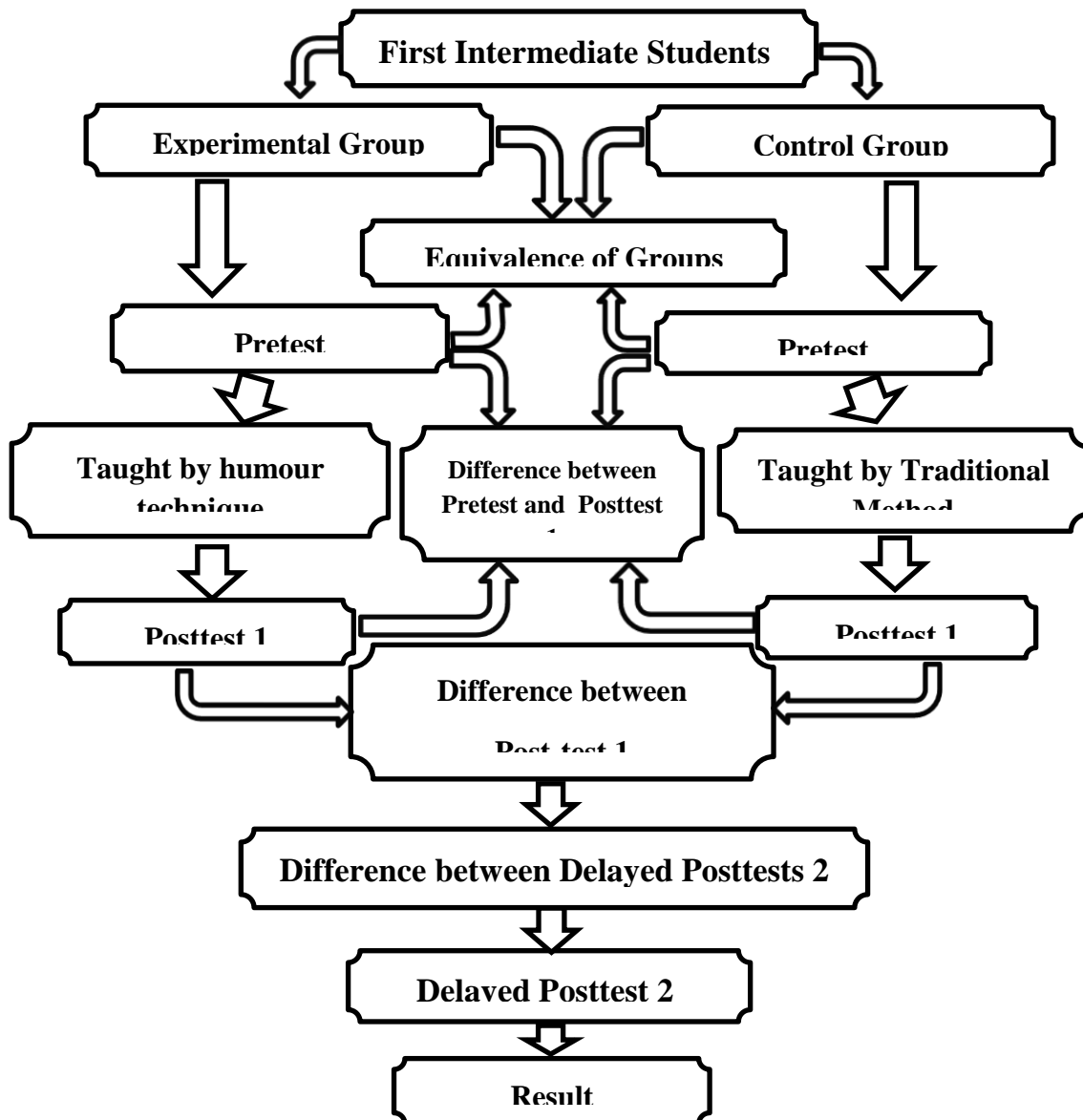


### **Section Three The Method**

#### **3.1 The Experimental Design:**

In order to achieve the aim of this research the researcher adopted the quasi-experimental design: the Nonrandomized Pre-Posttest1- delayed (posttest 2) design See Fig (1).

**The Experimental Design of The Study Figure (1)**



### **3.2 Population:**

The population of this research consists of the first year female pupils at the intermediate level in Mosul city during the second semester of the academic year 2017-2018.

### **3.3 The Sample:**

The 1<sup>st</sup> intermediate grade in Tadmur intermediate school for girls was chosen to be the sample of the study.

### **3.4 Equivalence between the Experimental and Control Groups**

After choosing two groups and before implementing the experiment, equivalence between the two groups in terms of certain variables was made for it may have a great effect on the results of the study. This information was collected from the available archives in the school and from the pupils themselves, which is a prerequisite demand for the equivalence of the two groups, in terms of the following:-

- 1- The age of the participants (counted in Months).
- 2- Student's grades in English Language at end of course examination.
- 3- The participant parents' educational attainment.

Some other important variables were also taken into consideration for the purpose of equivalence, namely pretest for the two groups to assure that the data of the test is unknown for the pupils, and the time available to each group. The two groups were equalized in terms of the previous variables (age, Student's grades in English Language at end of course examination and the participant parents' educational attainment).

#### **3.4.1 The pre-test**

In order to find-out the participants knowledge about the vocabulary, a pretest was administered for both the experimental and control groups before the beginning of the

experiment. This test consisted of (20) multiple-choice items in which each item was presented with four options. (See appendix (1)).

The T-test for the two independent samples was applied to compare the means of the groups. See Table (1) below:

**Table (1) Results of the T-test for Pupils' Scores in the pre-test**

Group	No.	Mean	SD.	T. value		Level of Significance	
				Calculated	Tabulated		
EG	30	29,3333	10,06302	0,579	2,002	Non Significant	0,05
CG	30	30,8333	10,00718				

As seen from table (1), the mean score of the EG is 29, 3333, and that of the CG is 30, 8333. The calculated t-value is 0,579, which is lower than the tabulated t-value, which reads 2,002 at the level of significance (0,05). This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between EG and CG groups at 0, 05 level of significance and under 58 degrees of freedom. So the groups are equivalent regarding this variable.

### **3.4.2 Time Allotted**

Five lessons a week were allotted to teach each group, and the specified time for each lesson was 15 minutes at the end of English lesson. The

researcher gave the lessons for both groups on the same day according to the timetable of the weekly lessons for the two groups.

### **3.5 The Instructional Material**

The teaching material of the current study was sixty-six humorous riddles taken from various Websites. The researcher made a kind of modification on some humorous riddles to be more appropriate to the pupils and making the stem more comprehensible for them. These selected materials were presented to the EG, within these humorous riddles sixty-six unknown vocabularies were selected as the target of this study.

These unknown vocabularies were verbs, adjectives, nouns and etc. (See appendix (2)). As for the control group, the same unknown vocabularies were also chosen to be the teaching material of the CG, but they were presented through ordinary sentences (See appendix (3)). In this current study the researcher chose to use only the multiple-choice items test. All the tests and teaching materials were conducted and prepared by the researcher (pre-test, post-test1 and delayed (post-test2).

### **3.6 Scoring Scheme**

The test consisted of twenty vocabulary items, each of which presented with four options. The total mark of the test was (100), divided equally on the number of the items. So, five marks were given for each correct answer and zero mark in the case of wrong answer.

### **3.7 The Validity of the Test**

According to Fraenkel *et al.*, (2012: 147) validity refers to “the degree to which evidence supports any inferences a researcher makes based on the data she/he has collected using a particular instrument”. For the purpose of verifying the validity of the test used in this research, face validity and content validity were used. Face validity was conducted and confirmed through interviewing five teachers from five different schools who are in service for more than ten years of English teaching and were asked to check whether the (70) vocabularies are familiar to the 1<sup>st</sup> intermediate pupils or not ( see appendix (4)). In order to present the face validity of the test, the test items were presented to a jury of experts in applied linguistics, psychologists and education to judge whether the tests are suitable for 1<sup>st</sup> intermediate pupils .The panel was also asked to make necessary modification

by adding and deleting items (See appendix (5)). All the jurors agreed that the test was within the accepted standards and suitable for measuring student's ability to learn new vocabularies, and ready to be conducted. Content validity was addressed to evaluate the test and come out with a validated test that yielded truthful and accurate results. To demonstrate this type of validity, Cohen (2007: 137) stated that the instrument must show what it fairly covers the domain or items that it purports to cover. As such, the content validity was observed through specifying all the relevant aspects that the test is intended to cover, the appropriateness of each vocabulary items and the amount of time devoted to the test.

### **3.8 Piloting the Study**

This procedure was conducted upon a sample of (30) female

intermediate pupils in (Al-Hariri) Intermediate school for girls in (6/2/2018). The purpose of current procedure was to, selecting the clearly understood humorous riddles which were considered the funniest and most manageable ones for the pupils, the riddles were written on the blackboard, then reading, translating and clarifying them to the pupils.

### **3.9 Piloting the Test**

Frankel et al. (2012: 628) referred to a pilot study as a trial of the proposed scale in order to find if there are any problems so that they can be dealt with before the study is carried out.

The researcher conducted a pilot test by applying the test to a group of pupils in Al-lathiqeya Intermediate school for girls. The aim of the test pilot was to find out the reliability and discrimination index of the items beside to check the time that pupils

need to complete the test, also to make sure that the stem of the items are clear obvious. The test was done on 20/2/2018; the researcher recorded the time when the first student finished the test or answered the questions and the last one who finished, thus the time which all pupils took for answering the questions of the test range between 20-30 minutes. The average time was (30) minutes to answer all items.

### **3.10 Reliability of the Test**

According to Fraenkel et al. (2012: 154), “reliability refers to the consistency of the scores obtained how consistent they are for each individual from one administration of an instrument to another and from one set of items to another”. Kurder-Richardson formula was utilized to calculate the reliability coefficient of the test, which come to be (0.81).

### **3.11 Procedure**

Three Procedures were used for conducting the current study for both experimental and control groups, a pre-test, treatment along with post-test1 and delayed (post-test2).

The pre-test was conducted before starting the experiment for both groups. The researcher prepared a test consisted of (20) multiple-choice items in which each item was presented with four options. The purpose of this procedure was to see whether the subjects had known the vocabularies beforehand or not. (See appendix (1)). After applying the pre-test for two groups, the experiment started on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2018. The teacher started teaching vocabularies for both groups following the procedures in each plan prepared by the teacher according to the two methods of teaching humour as a

technique and traditional method. The teaching process took three weeks it had two lessons for both groups at the same day. The duration for the two groups in each lesson was 15 minutes. Through the experiment, the teacher taught five vocabularies in a lesson for both groups, i.e. five words through five humorous riddles for EG and the same five words but within five sentences for CG. A post –test1 was then administered after the teaching process for both groups this test was the same test which was applied as a pre-test. This test aimed to determine whether using humour in teaching new vocabularies was more effective than the traditional teaching method (See appendix(1 )). In order to know whether or not the participants were able to recall the learned vocabularies two weeks after the treatment, a delayed post-test2 (memory retention test) was

administered after the post-test1. This test allowed the researcher to determine whether or not the participants were able to recall the learning vocabularies two weeks after the treatment. The items and options were presented in randomized order in this test to reduce the possibility of participants memorizing the items in the test (See appendix (6)).

### **3.12 The Result**

At the end of this study, the results obtained from the post-test1 and delayed post-test2 were analyzed and interpreted to test the validity in two alternative hypotheses.

#### **3.12.1 Testing the First Alternative Hypothesis:**

“There is a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental group as far as the acquisition of new English vocabularies



is concerned using the humour technique”.

the post-test1 scores of both groups as showing in Table (2).

To test this hypothesis, the T- test was used for two independent samples to find out if there is a significant difference in

**Table (2) Comparison between the Experimental and Control Groups according to the Posttest 1 Result.**

Group	N	Mean	SD	T-value		P. 0.05
				Calculated	Tabulated	
EG	30	63,0000	12,28961	2,593	2,002	Significant difference under 58df
CG	30	54,5000	13,08790			

As shown in the table (2), the average posttest 1 scores of the experimental group were 63, 0000 and the mean scores of the control group were 54, 5000. Since the calculated T-value is 2,593, which was found to be higher than the tabulated value 2,002 at the level of significance 0.05 and 58 degree of freedom. This shows that although both groups improved, but the

experimental group scored significantly higher than the control group.

Thus, by comparing the pre-test with posttest1 of the EG(See table (3)) there was a significant difference for two correlated samples in t-test as the calculated T-value is 16,674 which was found to be higher than the tabulated value 2,045 at the level of significance 0,05 and 29 degree of freedom. In other

words, the experimental group increased their vocabularies on the posttest1 scores when compared with their pre-test results. (There is a development in

acquisition and learning of vocabularies in the EG).

**Table (3) Comparison of the pre-test with posttest1 results of the Experimental Group**

Test	N	Mean	DS	T-value		P.0.05
				Calculated	tabulated	
Pre-test	30	29,3333	10,06302	16,674	2,045	Significant difference under 29df
Posttest 1		63,0000	12,28961			

As shown in the tables (2), (3) and results presented above, it could be claimed that the EG received vocabularies through humorous technique, outperformed the CG which received vocabularies through traditional method because there was a significant statistical difference between post-test scores of both groups and also a significant statistical difference between the EG pre-test and posttest1 scores.

Consequently, these results confirmed the first hypothesis and

indicated that teaching new English vocabularies by using humour as a technique is more effective than the traditional method.

### **3.12.2 Testing the Second Alternative Hypothesis:**

“There is a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental group as far as the retention and recalling of new English

vocabularies is concerned using the humour technique”.

In order to test this hypothesis the T-test was used for two independent samples to

find out if there was a significant difference in the delayed post-test2 scores of both groups as showing in Table (4).

**Table (4) Comparison of the Experimental and the Control Group for the delayed (posttest 2)**

Group	N	Mean	DS	T-value		P.0.05
				Calculated	Tabulated	
EG	30	56,1667	15,62951	3,193	2,002	Significance differences under 58df
CG	30	44,8333	11,55820			

From table (4) above, it can be seen that the average (posttest 2) scores of the experimental group were 56, 1667 and the mean scores of the control group were 44, 8333. Since the calculated T-value was 3,193 which was higher than the tabulated one (2,002) at (0,05) level of significance and 58 degree of freedom, the experimental group did better in retaining and recalling the vocabularies in delayed (posttest 2 memory retention).

These results confirmed the second alternative hypothesis and indicated that there is a statistically significant difference between the control and experimental group retention and recalling of new English vocabularies taught by the humour technique.

### **3.13 Discussion of the Results**

The major findings obtained from the statistical analysis point out that the scores of the pupils in posttest 1 in the

EG was significantly higher than the scores of the pupils in the CG. These results also revealed that the difference between the pre-test and posttest 1 was significantly higher in EG than the CG. In other words, the quantitative results showed better development in acquisition and learning new vocabularies than the CG. Further, the results verify the first alternative hypothesis.

In addition, the results also showed a statistically significant difference between EG and CG in delayed (posttest 2) for the benefit of the EG, thus the delayed posttest 2 (memory retention test) results showed that teaching vocabulary using humour helps the pupils to remember the vocabularies easily, it indicated that humour could facilitate and encourage pupils' vocabulary retention. Hence, this result confirmed the second alternative hypothesis.

### **3.14 Conclusions**

Based on the results of the current study, the researcher concluded the following:

The use of humour as a technique in teaching EFL vocabulary, contributes in acquiring new vocabularies compared to the traditional method. The use of the current technique significantly raised the pupils' attention, interaction, ability to acquire, learning, retention and recalling of the target vocabulary.

By the use of humour the teacher managed to overcome the individual differences among pupils, that is, it gives them more opportunities to participate and encouraged them give the opinions without trepidation and reluctant.

### **References**

- Atir. S. (2010). "Memory for information paired with humorous, relevant jokes". New Haven, CT: Yale University Senior thesis. (AQ: Un

published thesis, Yale University, New Haven, CT.).

Baddeley, A. (1999). **Essentials of Human Memory**. East Sussex: Psychology Press Ltd.

Bell, N. D. (2009). "Learning about and through humor in the second language classroom". **Language Teaching Research**, 13(241), 241-258. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org>.

Bryant, J., Brown, D., et al. (1981). "Effects of Humorous Illustrations in College Textbooks". **Human Communication Research**, 8, 43-57.

Chiasson. P. E. (2008). Using Humour in the Second Language Classroom (**ITESL-J**) Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org>.

Cohen, L.; Manion, L. et al. (2007): **Research Methods in Education**. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). London: Rutledge. Tylor and Francis Group.

Dzulkifli, M. A. & Tunku Badli. Z. T. S. (2013) "The effect of humour and

mood on memory recall". *Procedi-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 97(252-257).

Faulkner, T. O. D. (2011). Is Humor a Useful Classroom Tool to Motivation and Help Young Korean Learners to Remember? UN published Master thesis, UK. Birmingham University, Birmingham.

Fisher, M. S. (1997). "The Effect of Humor on Learning in a Planetarium". **Science Education**, 81 (6), 703-713.

Fraenkel, J.; Wallen, N and Hyun, H. (2012): **How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education**. (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Garner, R. L. (2006). "**Humor in pedagogy :How ha-ha can lead to aha College Reading**", 54(1), 177-180 Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org>.

Harmer, J. (1991). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*: New York: Longman.

- Houser, M. L., Cowan, R. L. & West, D. A. (2007). Investigating a New Education Frontier: Instructor communication behavior in CD-ROM texts-do Traditionally Positive Behaviors Translate into this Environment? *Communication Quarterly*, 55, 19- 38.
- Mahdiloo & Izazpanah. (2017). "The Impact of Humorous Movie Clips on Better Learning of English Language Vocabulary". **International Journal of Research in English Vocabulary**. Retrieved from, [www.ijreeonline.com](http://www.ijreeonline.com).
- Martin, Diane M. preiss, Raymond W., et al. [2006]. A Meta Analytic Assessment of the Effect of Humorous Lectures on Learning. In Barbara Gayle, Raymond Preiss, Mancy, & Mike Allen [Eds], **Classroom Communication and instructional processes: advances through meta-analysis** (pp. 295-313). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Matthews, M. L. (2011). A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Hippocampus: the Effects of Humor on Students Achievement and Memory Retention (Doctoral Dissertation). Available from Pro Quest Dissertation & theses <http://eric.ed.gor>.
- McBain, R. (2011). **Teaching Vocabulary to ESL Students**. Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov>.
- Naidu, V. S. (2014). "Humour in English Language Teaching Research" *Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL)*. Vol. 2-Issue. 1. 2014, Retrieved from, <http://www.rjelal.com>.
- Ness. M. (2009). **Laughing Through Readings: Using Joke Books to Build fluency**. The Reading Teacher, 62(8), pp. 691-694 Do1:101598/RT. 62. 8. 7.

- Schmidt, S., R. (1994): “Effects of Hmor on Sentence Memory”. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory and Cognition*, 20, 953-967. Abstract retrieved July, 30, 2013 from <http://pcycnet.apa.org>.
- Schmitt, N., (2010). *Researching Vocabulary. A Vocabulary Research Manual*. University of Nottingham, UK.
- Schmitz, J. R. (2002). “Humor as Pedagogical Tool in Foreign Language and Translation Courses”. *Humor*, 15(1), 89-113. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10>.
- Stahl, Steven A. (1999). *Vocabulary development*. Brookline: Brook line Books.
- Tezi, Y, . L. (2008). Teaching Vocabulary Through Using Audio Jokes To Pre-Intermediate Level Preparatory Class Students at Selcuk University. Retrieved from <http://acikerisim.selcuk.edu>.
- Tosta, A. L. (2001). “Laugh and learn: Thinking over the ‘funny teacher’ myth”. *English Teaching forum*. 39(1), 26-29
- Wanzer, M. B. & Frymier, A. B. (1999). “The Relationship between Student Perceptions of Instructor. Humor and Students’ Reports of Learning”, *Communication Education*, 48(1), 48-62.
- Zabidin, N. B. (2015). “The Use of Humorous Text in Improving ESL Learners’ Vocabulary Comprehension and Retention”. *English Language Teaching*; Vol. 8, No. 9;

## **Appendix (1)**

### **Pre-test and post-test1**

**Choose the correct answer:**

<p>1. This hole became -----.</p> <p>a) puddle</p> <p>b) pool</p> <p>c) lake</p> <p>d) river</p> <p>2. Yesterday my mother made a ----- with vegetables.</p> <p>a) cake</p> <p>b) patty</p> <p>c) candy</p> <p>d) coffee</p> <p>3. A ----- is marked with 1-6 spots.</p> <p>a) cards</p> <p>b) kite</p> <p>c) dice</p> <p>d) dominos</p> <p>4. A ----- matches two papers.</p> <p>a) board</p> <p>b) sharper</p> <p>c) marker</p>	<p>9. ----- is funny.</p> <p>a) problem</p> <p>b) riddle</p> <p>c) sentence</p> <p>d) exam</p> <p>10. There is a ----- on flowers this morning.</p> <p>a) shine</p> <p>b) rain</p> <p>c) dew</p> <p>d) paint</p> <p>11. There are a lot of ----- in my garden.</p> <p>a) earth</p> <p>b) yard</p> <p>c) ground</p> <p>d) soil</p> <p>12. I need a new pair of swimming -----.</p> <p>a) trunks</p>
---	--



d) stapler	b) trousers
5. The ----- runs very fast.  a) heron b) ostrich c) bird d) duck	c) shirts d) shorts 13. I have a headache because I changed my----- yesterday.
6. Go to your doctor and ask for -----.  a) guide b) job c) advice d) help	a) blanket b) pillow c) cover d) pad
7. I ----- you I will help you.  a) oath b) word c) swear d) promise	14.the color of----- is orange .  a) grape b) lemon c) tangerine d) grapefruit
8. A cat was walking along the top of the -- -----.  a) fence b) garage c) ceiling d) bedroom	15. My mother makes a ----- of meat and vegetables.  a) cheese b) dessert c) salad d) stew 16. We have a small -----in our house.  a) mall b) pantry

	<p>c) market</p> <p>d) groceries</p>
<p>17. My father used ----- to build our house.</p> <p>a) wood</p> <p>b) sand</p> <p>c) brick</p> <p>d) glass</p> <p>18. It's better not to sleep on your back , If you -----</p> <p>a) cough</p> <p>b) breath</p> <p>c) snore</p> <p>d) whisper</p>	<p>19- Fruits have ----- in them.</p> <p>a) cereal</p> <p>b) corn</p> <p>c) wheat</p> <p>d) seeds</p> <p>20 My mother is -----potatoes.</p> <p>a) preparing</p> <p>b) making</p> <p>c) peeling</p> <p>d) mixing</p>

## **Appendix (2)**

### **The humorous riddles presented to the experimental group**

1. Q / If you're in hungry mood, go here first and find some food?  
A / Pantry
2. Q / What do trees eat for breakfast?  
A / Oak meal
3. Q / What's red and bad for your teeth?  
A / A brick
4. Q / What begins with Tends with T and has T in it?

A / A teapot

5. Q / Which room has no doors, no windows?

A / A mushroom

6. Q / What has three feet but no legs or arms?

A / A yard

7. Q / What did the tree wear to the pool?

A / Its trunks

8. Q / Why did the horse cross the road?

A / Because somebody shouted hay.

9. Q / What did zero say to eight?

A / Nice belt

10. Q / I will lose my head in the morning but I will always gain it at night what am I?

A / A pillow

11. Q / I'm a fruit, I'm orange. I'm smaller than orange?

A / Tangerine

12. Q / What did the apple tree say to the farmer?

A / Stop picking me!

13. Q / Blue lives in blue house ,Mr. pink live in the pink house ,and Mr. brown lives in the brown house ,who lives in the white house ?

A / The president

14. Q / I am something you will always search for me, but when you know me, I am nothing.

A / Riddle

15. Q / What are two things people never eat before breakfast?

A / Lunch and supper.

16. Q / What is black when get it, red when you use it, and white when you are all through with it?

A / Charcoal

17. Q / I welcome the day with a show of light. I bathe the earthy stuff of dawn 'but by the noon, alas! I'm gone. What am I?

A / The dew

18. Q / What runs but can't walk?

A / The faucet.

19. Q / What gets wet as it drives?

A / Towel

20. Q / What is runs around the house, but doesn't move?

A / The fence

21. Q / Pupil: "would you punish me for something I didn't do ?

Teacher: "of course not "

Pupil: Good, because I haven't done my homework.

22. Q / What did the chef name is son?

A / Stew

23. Q / Teacher: why are you late?

Student: there was a man who lost a hundred dollar bill.

Teacher: that's nice .Were you helping him

24. Q / Why is music like a fish?

A/ they both have scales!

25. Q / What can clap without any hands?

A / Thunder

26. Q / The more you have of it, the less you see, what is it?

A / Darkness

27. Q / Who eats a lot of Iron without getting sick?

A / The rust

28. Q / Why did the credit card go to prison?

A / It was guilty as charged.

29. Q / How are tigers like sergeants in the army?

A / The both wear stripes.

30. Q / I'm full of gas but I'm not a car. I have many rings but I'm not a jewelry store, I am a large plant, who I am?

A / Saturn

31.Q /I climb trees but I'm not a cat , I eat nuts but I'm a bird , I'm small but brown .I have a nice tail ?

A / Squirrel

32. Q / Where do fish go if they need money?

A / The prawn shop.

33. Q / What two words does this say?

A / Scrambled eggs.

34. Q / What do you call a snowman in the summer?

A/ a puddle

35. Q / I'm a fruit, I'm red there are millions in me?  
A/ Pomegranate.
36. Q / Lovely and round, I shine with pale light. Grown in darkness, a lady's use it?  
A / Pearls
37. Q / I am medium sized and red, I also grow underground people usually eat me, cooked, and in a salad sometimes, I am in soups .  
A / I am a beet
38. Q / What did Mr. and Mrs. Hamburger name their daughter?  
A /Patty
39. Q / What has six sides but no face?  
A /Dice
40. Q / If a pirate was to join the military, what branch of the armed service would probably go in to  
A / The navy, they love the sea
41. Q / I keep pieces of paper together but I'm not a paper?  
A /It's a stapler
42. Q / Which vegetable should you never invite on a boat trip?  
A /A leek
- 43.Q / I have a magnet but I don't stick to metal , I have a needle but I can't sew ,I a sometimes have scales but I can't weigh anything . I help you find your way but I'm not map. I have NE W S on me but I'm not a TV?  
A /Compass
44. Q / Why did the farmer bury all his money?  
A / To make his soil rich!
45. Q / What did the mama volcano say to the baby volcano?  
A / "Don't erupt while I'm talking ".
46. Q /Why do fish swim in salt water?  
A / Pepper makes them sneeze.
47. Q / I am a noisily sound .I'm coming from nose and mouth and people run away from me What Am I?  
A / Snore
48. Q /We are dry and hard, we can be very small, farmers put us in the soil. We need water to grow into plants, what are we?

A / We are seeds

49. Q / What do you call a crocodile with GPS?

A / A navigator

50. Q / What do you call a 108 spiders on a tire?

A / Spinning wheel

51. Q / If you lose me you may cause people around me to lose me too.

What am I?

A / Your temper

52. Q / What gets broken if it's not kept?

A / A promise

53. Q / What did the spider say when he broke his new web?

A / Darn it

54. Q / You will throw me a way when you want to use me. You will take me in when you don't want to use me, what am I?

A / An anchor

55. Q / What do you call a fish that only cares about himself?

A / Selfish

56. Q / I don't have eye but once I did see, once I had thoughts, but now I'm empty. What am I?

A / A skull

57. Q / I run very fast. I can't fly, I'm a bird, my eggs are huge, what I am?

A / Ostrich

58. Q / If I don't share it, I have it, but the moment share it, I don't have it what is it?

A / Secret

59. Q / What has a foot but no legs?

A / A snail

60. Q / It lives without a body, hears without ears, and is born in air, what is it?

A / An echo

61. Q / Everyone in the world, they generously give it. But never take it.

Then what is it?

A / Advice

62. Q / What word has five letters but sounds like it only has one?

A / Queue

63. Q / What tastes better it smells?

A / Your tongue

64. Q / What's easy to get into, but hard to get out of?

A / Trouble

65. Q /A: I'm in a big trouble!

B: Why is that?

A: I saw a mouse in my house!

B: Oh, well, all you need to do is use a trap.

66. Q/ Why did the banana go to the doctor?

A/ because it was not peeling well.

### **Appendix (3)**

#### **The sentences that contain the target vocabularies presented to the control group**

1. You should paint the rust on the window.
2. I was feeling guilty.
3. The wall paper has pink and white stripes.
4. Saturn is the planet with rings around it.
5. Squirrel cut a nut with his teeth.
6. Yesterday we ate prawn dish for lunch.
7. If you hungry. I can mix for you some scrambled eggs.
8. Pomegrante is good and full with vitamin C and B.
9. Pearls are used to make jewellery.
10. She likes to eat beet.
11. He was wearing a navy shirt.
12. Leek looks like the onion in teste.
13. South is opposite north on a compass.
14. The volcano could erupt at any time.
15. When you have a cold, you sneeze a lot.
16. My grandfather was a navigator.
17. There are many women working on spinning wheel.
18. He must learn to control his temper.
19. I must darn the hole in my pocket.
20. Ships anchor is heavy.
21. I dislike selfish people.
22. The skull is a part of the body.

23. Let me tell you a secret.
24. A snail moves slowly.
25. If you shout loudly, you'll hear the echo.
26. I was before him in the queue.
27. I hurt my tongue because the soup was hot.
28. I'm in a big trouble.
29. The fish scales 2 pounds.
30. The president visits our city.
31. She was cooking rice for supper.
32. We need some charcoal for the picnic.
33. There is no water in faucet.
34. The towel was wet.
35. He used some cheese to trap the mouse.
36. Picking on me up when I'm down.
37. My mom punishes me because I didn't do my homework
38. My father gave me 50 dollar bill.
39. The sky was dark and it started to thunder.
40. Stars cannot shine without darkness.
41. The player jumps 3 yard.
42. This kind of teapot is very expensive.
43. She put a blue belt on her dress.
44. The paper was peeling from the wall.
45. We have mushroom and meat for lunch.
46. Don't stand in that puddle.
47. She likes to eat a patty with cheese.
48. A dice is used to play games.
49. Can I borrow your stapler to hold these papers together?
50. Large birds, such as the ostrich, cannot fly.
51. My father advices me to get up early.
52. I promise you, I will visit you.
53. The fence of our school is brown.
54. See if you can solve this riddle.
55. There was heavy dew this morning.
56. These trees need a good soil.
57. There are t-shirts, swimming trunks and sports shoes in the shop.



- 58.I bought a new pillow.  
59.Tangerine has a soft cover.  
60.I made stew for dinner.  
61.There are sugar, flour and jam in our pantry.  
62.The house is made of bricks.  
63.Its loud snore kept me awake.  
64.Farmers sow seeds in the field.  
65.She was sitting under the large oak tree.  
66. The farmer put the hay to the cows.

#### **Appendix (4) List of words**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Words</b>	<b>Familiar</b>	<b>Unfamiliar</b>
1-	<b>Stripes</b>		
2-	<b>Patty</b>		
3-	<b>Hay</b>		
4-	<b>Saturn</b>		
5-	<b>Squirrel</b>		
6-	<b>Snore</b>		
7-	<b>Yard</b>		
8-	<b>Oak</b>		
9-	<b>Prawn</b>		
10-	<b>Darkness</b>		
11-	<b>Seeds</b>		
12-	<b>Supper</b>		
13-	<b>Hole</b>	*	

<b>No.</b>	<b>Words</b>	<b>Familiar</b>	<b>Unfamiliar</b>
14-	<b>Selfish</b>		
15-	<b>Dice</b>		
16-	<b>Pillow</b>		
17-	<b>President</b>		
18-	<b>Soil</b>		
19-	<b>Puddle</b>		
20-	<b>Pomegranate</b>		
21-	<b>Thunder</b>		
22-	<b>Brick</b>		
23-	<b>Cheetah</b>	*	
24-	<b>Stew</b>		
25-	<b>Echo</b>		
26-	<b>Peeling</b>		
27-	<b>Picking on</b>		
28-	<b>Compass</b>		
29-	<b>Rust</b>		
30-	<b>Queue</b>		
31-	<b>Stapler</b>		
32-	<b>Riddle</b>		
33-	<b>Anchor</b>		
34-	<b>Advice</b>		

<b>No.</b>	<b>Words</b>	<b>Familiar</b>	<b>Unfamiliar</b>
35-	<b>Leap</b>	*	
36-	<b>Towel</b>		
37-	<b>Snail</b>		
38-	<b>Dew</b>		
39-	<b>Charcoal</b>		
40-	<b>Scales</b>		
41-	<b>Trap</b>		
42-	<b>Punish</b>		
43-	<b>Promise</b>		
44-	<b>Ostrich</b>		
45-	<b>Trunks</b>		
46-	<b>Teapot</b>		
47-	<b>Guilty</b>		
48-	<b>Mushroom</b>		
49-	<b>Temper</b>		
50-	<b>Bill</b>		
51-	<b>Tongue</b>		
52-	<b>Scrambled</b>		
53-	<b>Darn</b>		
54-	<b>Secret</b>		
55-	<b>Pavement</b>	*	

<b>No.</b>	<b>Words</b>	<b>Familiar</b>	<b>Unfamiliar</b>
56-	<b>Erupt</b>		
57-	<b>Pantry</b>		
58-	<b>Sneeze</b>		
59-	<b>Navigator</b>		
60-	<b>Trouble</b>		
61-	<b>spinning wheel</b>		
62-	<b>Beet</b>		
63-	<b>Tangerine</b>		
64-	<b>Navy</b>		
65-	<b>Pearls</b>		
66-	<b>Skull</b>		
67-	<b>Faucet</b>		
68-	<b>Belt</b>		
69-	<b>Fence</b>		
70-	<b>Leek</b>		

Excluded vocabularies \*

### **Appendix (5) Names of Jurers**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Pecialization</b>	<b>Scientific Degree</b>	<b>Scientific Rank</b>	<b>University, College</b>
<b>1.</b>	Dr. Nahida Taha Majeed	Methods of Teaching English	Ph.D	Prof.	Universitt of Tikrit
<b>2.</b>	Dr.Wayis J Ibraheem	Linguistics	Ph.D	Prof	Mosul/ Basic Education
<b>3.</b>	Dr. Basim Yahia jasim	Applied Linguistics	Ph.D	Prof.	University of Mosul
<b>4.</b>	Dr.Hussein Ali Ahmad Aljarjary	Applied Linguistics	Ph.D	Prof.	College of Language Newroz, University ,Dohuk
<b>5.</b>	Dr.Shuaib Saeed Abdul Fattah	Methods of Teaching English	Ph.D	Asst.Prof	Mosul/ Education for Humanities
<b>6.</b>	Dr.Isam Ahmad Abd	Applied Linguistics	Ph.D	Asst.Prof	Mosul/ Basic Education
<b>7.</b>	Dr. Istabraq Tariq Alazzawi	Methods of Teaching English	Ph.D	Asst.Prof	Universitt of Tikrit

## **Appendix (6) Delayed post-test2**

**Choose the correct answer:**

<p>1. I ----- you I will help you.</p> <p>a) promise b) word c) swear d) oath</p> <p>2. I saw a cat on the -----.</p> <p>a) ceiling b) garage c) fence d) bedroom</p> <p>3. A----- is funny.</p> <p>a) problem b) exam c) sentence d) riddle</p> <p>7. This hole became -----.</p>	<p>4. There is ----- on flowers this morning.</p> <p>a) dew b) rain c) shine d) paint</p> <p>5. There is a lot of ----- in my garden.</p> <p>a) earth b) soil c) ground d) yard</p> <p>6. I need a new pair of swimming -----.</p> <p>a) shirts b) trousers c) trunks d) shorts</p> <p>14. It's better not to sleep on your back, If</p>
--	--

<p>a) ake</p> <p>b) pool</p> <p>c) puddle</p> <p>d) river</p> <p>8.Yesterday my mother made a----- with vegetables.</p> <p>a) cake</p> <p>b) coffee</p> <p>c) candy</p> <p>d) patty</p> <p>9. A ----- has 1- 6 spots.</p> <p>a) dice</p> <p>b) kite</p> <p>c) cards</p> <p>d) dominos</p> <p>10. A ----- matches two papers.</p> <p>a) board</p> <p>b) sharper</p> <p>c) stapler</p> <p>d) marker</p>	<p>you ----- .            a) cough</p> <p>b) breath</p> <p>c) whisper</p> <p>d) snore</p> <p>15. Fruits have ----- in them.</p> <p>a) cereal</p> <p>b) seeds</p> <p>c) wheat</p> <p>d) corn</p> <p>16. My mother is ----- potatoes.</p> <p>a) peeling</p> <p>b) making</p> <p>c) preparing</p> <p>d) mixing</p> <p>17. A ----- is used to sleep on.</p> <p>a) blanket</p> <p>b) pad</p> <p>c) cover</p> <p>d) pillow</p>
---	--

<p>11. The ----- runs very fast.</p> <p>a) heron b) duck c) bird d) ostrich</p> <p>12. Go to your doctor and ask for -----.</p> <p>a) guide b) advice c) job d) help</p> <p>13. My father used ----- to build our house.</p> <p>a) brick b) sand c) wood d) glass</p>	<p>18. The color of----- is orange.</p> <p>a) grape b) bear c) grapefruit d) tangerine</p> <p>19. My mother cooks a ----- of meat and vegetables.</p> <p>a) cheese b) stew c) salad d) dessert</p> <p>20. We have a small -----in our house.</p> <p>a) mall b) market c) pantry d) groceries</p>
---	--