

Optimism and Vitality of Life in Green's *The Fault in Our Stars*: A Corpus Linguistics Perspective

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Abstract

This research explores how corpus-based analysis of the words indicates *optimism* and *vitality* in John Greene's '*The Fault in Our Stars*'. For the required purpose, a corpus of Greene's novel is selected which is analysed with the help of Antconc 3.5.8 software. The words selection has been done by feeding the text onto the Antconc software, and adopting the words with the highest frequencies in terms of clusters and *n-grams*. To accomplish the validity, collocations and colligation trends have also been analysed. The frequencies of words and their excessive use confirm positivity, optimism and vitality that are the distinguished characteristics of John Greene's writing. The study also highlights the usages of words and their resultant effects in Greene's writing style.

Keywords: Antconc software, Corpus linguistics, Vitality, Optimism, Love

1. Introduction

This research aims to present a study, which has examined different dimensions of meaning of life in depth. It tends to result an answer to the urgency of cancer survivors who are mostly indulged in existential vacuum because of miserable status. Despite that, they can be optimistic and hopeful for the moments they possess other than pain. Related to the elucidation on human's effort for survival supplying meaning of life, this work encourages the strength and positivity in the life of sufferers. One of the extensively relevant stories that deliver this theme is in *The Fault in Our Stars*.

This novel by Greene is working of fiction and alongside that an original scenario of the world of plagued, diseased and the oppressed. Author has portrayed the true picture of ill-fated lovers by his live experiences of the cancer patients. In his student life, he came across a nerd fighter Esther Earl, who worked as huge motivation behind the specific novel. She passed away in 2010 because of cancer and gave Greene with the vision for trials which a cancer patient goes through. The character of Esther has glimpses in Miss Lancaster who is the heroine of this novel.

Greene followed the style of omniscient narration, and he made Hazel and Esther, the representatives of the ideology of the sufferer. By placing the girl as central narrator, he effectively presents the mortality theme to the American adults. The novel carries universality because it presents the portrayal of the cancer sufferers throughout the world. Green' style is very impressive, and arouses respect and appreciation for the character of Hazel, and arouses sympathy for people with this deadly disease.

Author's choice of characters is different because youthful dramatis personae leave an unfading effect on the minds of the readers. Hazel, the central narrator and the protagonist is a sixteen-year-old girl, suffering from a terminal form of thyroid cancer and was confined to breathe with the help of oxygen cylinder and Augustus an 18 years' hero with a removed leg because of cancer. Descriptive qualitative and quantitative designs are used in this study. Qualitative research is conducted to elaborate the behaviour, perception, motivation, action holistically in descriptive way, in a naturalistic context with the help of naturalistic methods. According to Moleong (2007: 6) the Antconc 3.5.8 is used to elaborate the quantitative corpus-based procedures for authenticity in the research.

John Green's novel *The Fault in Our Stars* as the source material of the study, has been collected and fed to The Antconc 3.5.8. The words showing maximum frequencies are utilized and are used as the tokens-- of optimism and hope. The words having less frequency are ignored by the researcher.

1.1 Research Objectives

The main objectives of the research study are

- i. To find out author's evident theme of optimism in his writing through the selection of words

- ii. To help and facilitate the readers through words creating optimism in depressed condition
- iii. To create liveliness among the people who are suffering with miserable diseases

1.2 Research Questions

The research study focuses upon the following questions

- i. How does John Greene's selection of words create optimism for people suffering from incurables disease?
- ii. How do dying Gus pursuit a lively life for readers?
- iii. How does Greene inculcate hope in his diseased characters?

2. Literature Review

A corpus-based study of words that indicate optimism in novels is considered the foremost persistent and interesting space of linguistic inquiry in modern research. According to Scott (1980: 196) optimism is a unique way of a factious prose narrative about kinsmen and the reactions about an amount of time period, showing kinds of human traits in respect to life. Having Optimism as a generalized expectancy that smart as opposition dangerous outcomes can typically occur once confronted with issues across necessary life domains (Scheier and Carver, 1985). It's a robust expectation that despite the inevitable setbacks, frustrated incidents and felt experiences gradually seem alright.

Generally, optimism is employed to represent a positive perspective and may be an area of positive scientific discipline. Optimism will be temperamental, that is, some individuals naturally have additional encouraging life, and however at the identical time, it will be conjointly learned with the correct style of experiences.

Explanatorily, optimism is a psychological and mental attribute that individuals experience at specific attire, both positive and negative, or in another sense, the approach individuals mentally justify to happen to them. Dispositional optimism is a degree of expectations that allow smart and fascinating things to occur than dangerous things in the future (Scheier & Carver, 1985). The expectations and hopes are elemental for someone's temperament traits, even some people are biologically more optimistic than demoralized. Pessimistic approach is an associated degree entrenched habit of mind that has sweeping and calamitous consequences: depressed mood, resignation, performance and even unexpectedly poor physical health (Seligman, 1995).

A strategy "defensive pessimism" is utilized by considerate individuals to assist them manage their stress so that they will work fruitfully. Defensive pessimism helps in fighting against the harsh circumstances by the expansion of bravery and courage. Then, the sufferer becomes mentally stable and copes all the dangerous incidents that may occur. Dispositional pessimism, in the similar manner, is a struggle against the thoughts of negative results. Nonetheless, each one of their performances differs. Dispositional pessimism shows less perceived management, which suggests that sufferers are unable to deal properly and

continue the behaviour till the goal is achieved. According to Dr. Jeffery Rossman (2010), dispositional pessimism is the tendency to believe the worst on an identical basis.

Through the transitivity analysis, Nguyen (2012:86) has revealed that language structures will turn out sure meanings and beliefs that aren't always expressed for readers. With this, a smart variety of matter, rhetorical students have commenced creating analyses of various texts (Msuya, 2014:, p. 134) to unfold its totally different ideologies through the systemic-functional linguistics (SFL) that established a bond between the word alternative and the meanings. Nguyen (2012) has looked into the temperamental portrayal of the mother while analysing the story entitled '*Heroic Mother by HoaPham*'. Focusing on the identical style of literary text, Msuya (2014) studied Peter Abraham's *Mine Boy* through the SFL framework however with specific relation in terms of verbal processes of the characters named Xuma and Leah. The results unrolled that the feminine character incorporates a stronger temperament than the male that is somehow associated degree of antithesis to the findings in Gallardo (2006). The readers might conclude that "*although it's numerous meanings, the readers might get one straight line*" dream refers to some stunning things. These stunning things sometimes don't belong to US nonetheless the solely approach is imagining them to become true.

Logo therapy is a term derived from logos, a Greek word that interprets as meaning, and therapy is a medical aid, that is outlined as treatment of a condition, illness, or personality disorder. Developed by Viktor Frankl, the concept is supported on the idea that attribute is intended by the rummage around for a life purpose; logo therapy is that the pursuit of meanings for one's life. Logo therapy asserts that the essential motivation for someone is to search out those means which are associated with the reinvigorating an individual's impetus. The development of logo therapy is clearly visual within the novel. The author has connected this act of victimization totally in different manner in using typical words for his emotions like as love, life, believe, laugh, pain etc.

In this novel, the words showing most frequency are being thought-about for the analysis. The opposite words having less frequency are advisedly unnoticed by the investigator. Thus, this frequency is calculated by the assistance of Antconc computer code. Antconc may be a program to do analysis of electronic texts (that is, corpus linguistics) to search out and explore patterns in language. Laurence Anthony of Waseda University had created it. It is, in my opinion, one in all the foremost elegant and straightforward to use corpus tools out there. Antconc may be a package, multiplatform tool for finishing corpus linguistics analysis and data-driven learning.

3. Methodology

In this research, the novel of John Greene is analysed by using mixed (quantitative and qualitative) method. Corpus tool is used in order to show the authenticity of the research. A detailed analysis is being done of the word's frequencies gathered by corpus. After reading some of the works of John Greene, we selected his novel *The Fault in Our Stars* in order to check optimism in the style of the writer. Then re-reading the novel a couple of time the words that are expressing optimist were enlisted. Antconc is being used to check the words

with the highest frequency. The words are put in search term to check concordance. Words getting maximum hits are analysed.

3.1 Collection and Interpretation of Data

The data for a corpus analysis text is required to be in machine-readable form. For this research, the text of *The Fault in Our Stars* in xxx.txt format is used as an input data that is fed onto Antconc software. The analysis of the words, which are creating optimism in the novel and their interpretation, go hand in hand. For that reason, both sections of data collection and data interpretations have been placed together. The text of the novel was downloaded in Pdf. File and then was converted into plain text.

Reading the novel "*The Fault in Our Stars*" is the first step for data collection. The data of study is gathered by using documentary technique. It means that the researchers have collected the information by reading, studying and analysing the related theory from specific books and journals related to the object of the study. Researcher has gathered information from text books and internet which are related to the issue in discussion and referred in order to support this study. After reading the novel for several times until its full meaning is understood, the procedure for analysing data is been continued by the following steps:

- i. Identifying the sentences or dialogues that give information about optimism.
- ii. Classifying the words based on the characteristic optimism and pessimism accordingly by Quora (2012).
- iii. Giving the explanations and reasons to conclude the story as the whole.

While reading the text through software, most frequently used words have been observed in order to create optimism. A detailed analysis of the selected words is given below in order to connect their impact for creating optimism.

3.2 Okay: A Word Promoting Optimism and Vitality

'Okay' is an American English word, denoting approval, vitality, acceptance and optimism. This word falls in different grammatical categories. As an exclamation, it denotes that everything is right. As a verb and adverb, it tells that everything is well, possible and gives something the thumbs up and green light. As a noun it is approval, endorsement, rectification, blessing, satisfaction, moderateness and adequacy.

"okay" for them will mean "always" As the line says, "Okay," he said after forever. "Maybe okay will be our always" (Chapter 5, page 5).

"It was okay, that I was okay, that I would be okay, and my father was trying so hard not to sob" "Okay", "He said. "ingottogotosleep. It's almost one. "Okay," I said. "Okay," he said (Chapter 2, page 2).

I giggled and said, "Okay." And then the line was.... "He was okay" (Chapter 5, page 5).

The screenshot is showing frequency of the word and occurrence at most prominent places in the text.

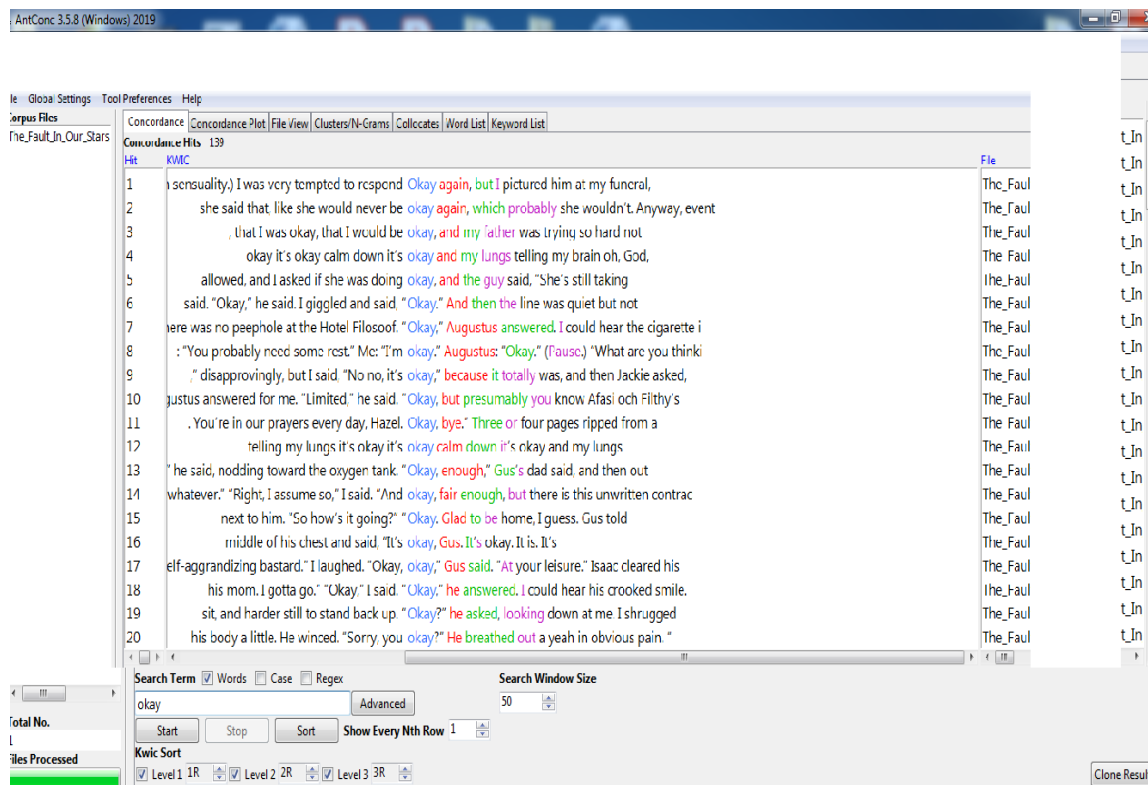


Figure 1. Frequency of the word and occurrence at most prominent places in the text

3.3 Love: A Token of Positivity

Love is defined as a showcase of deep attraction, affection and emotional attachment for a person or thing. The writer has used this word very frequent in the novel, which shows that characters are having positivity even in very pathetic condition. As this word is attached to positivity, gratitude and happiness which ultimately leads towards optimism. The word denotes hope, trust and enthusiasm which are qualities of optimistic approach.

“But I believe in true love, you know.... as your life does” (Chapter 4, page 7).

“I’m in love with you, and I know that love is just a shout into the void, and that”

“Oblivion is inevitable, and that we’re all doomed and that there will come a day when all our labour has been returned to dust, and I know the sun will swallow the only earth we’ll ever have, and I am in love with you.”(Chapter 10, page 10).

“I love her. I am so lucky to love her, Van Houten”. (Chapter 25, page 07).

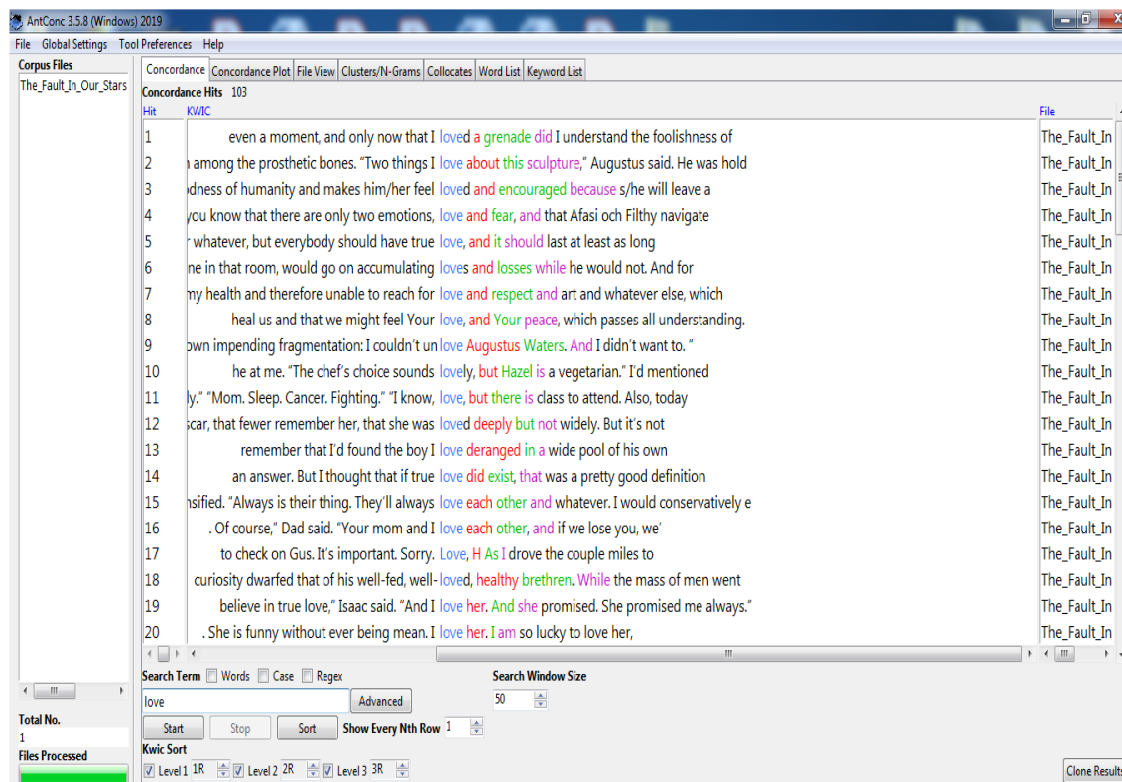


Figure 2. The image showing the concordance hits of the relevant word

3.4 Life: A Symbol of Optimism and Vitality

Optimism is a mental attitude related to orientation of life. Being alive and able to breath specifically in misery of deadly disease is a light of hope. Life is a characteristic that distinguish physical entities and their biological procession such as sustaining abnormal health conditions.

“And I’m the one who needs to get a life.” (Chapter 20, page 2).

“I told myself that imagining a met in my brain or my shoulder would not affect the invisible reality going on inside of me, and that therefore all such thoughts were wasted moments in a life composed of a definitional finite set of such moments. I even tried to tell myself to live my best life today” (Chapter 13, page 2).

“Because it is my life mom, it belongs to me” (Chapter 10, page 2).

“If you don’t live a life in service of a greater good, you’ve gotta at least die a death in service of a greater good, you know? And I fear that I won’t get either a life or a death that means anything.”(Chapter 11, page 8).

“It is a good life, Hazel Grace”(Chapter 17, page 1).

“Every cell is born of a previous cell, which was born of a previous cell. Life comes from life. Life begetsBegets life.”(Chapter 22, page 5).

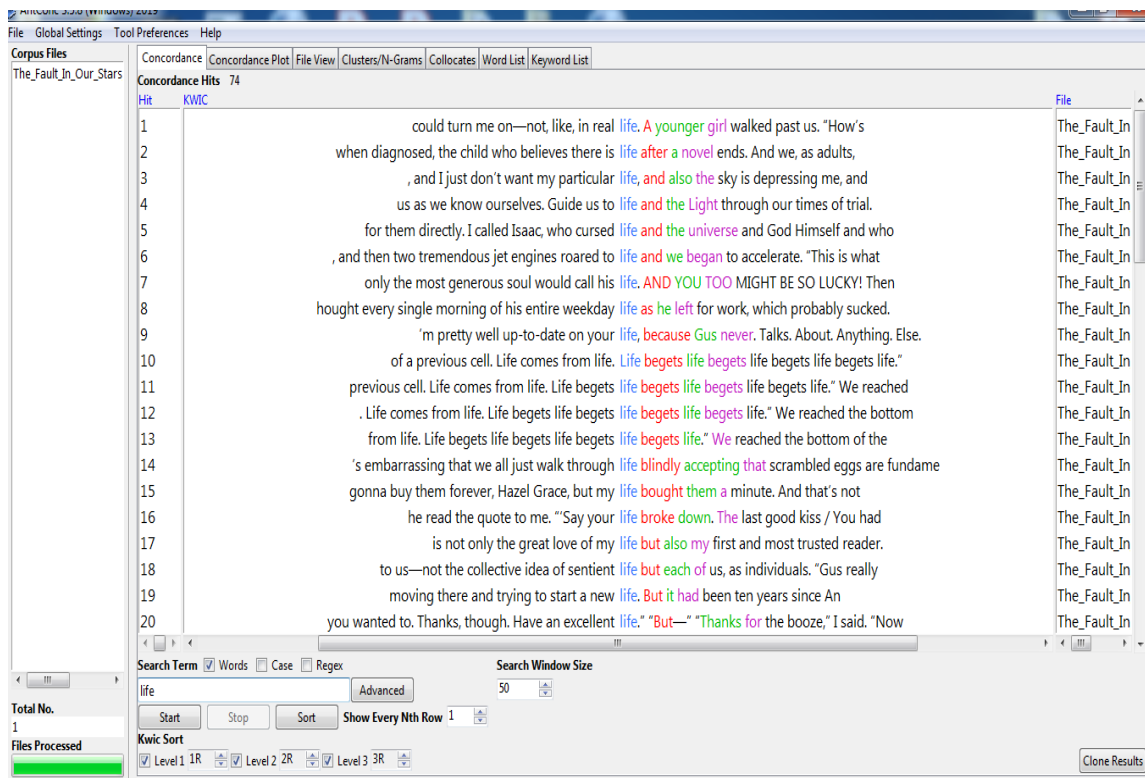


Figure 3. Concordance of the word “life” is prominent in the picture

3.5 Believe: A Sign of Verve and Vitality

To accept that something is true especially without proof and holding something as an opinion relates to positivity. The pessimist trust and believe very less. The frequent uses of the word believe shows that he is optimistic.

“Don’t you believe in true love?” (Chapter 4, page 07).

“Sure, I fear earthly oblivion. But, I mean, not to sound like my parents, but I believe humans have souls, and I believe in the conservation of souls.” (-Chapter 11, page 7).

“That’s what I believe. I believe the universe wants to be noticed. I think the universe is improbably biased toward consciousness, that it rewards intelligence in part because the universe enjoys its elegance being observed. And who am I, living in the middle of history, to tell the universe that it—or my observation of it—is temporary?” (Chapter 14, page 3).

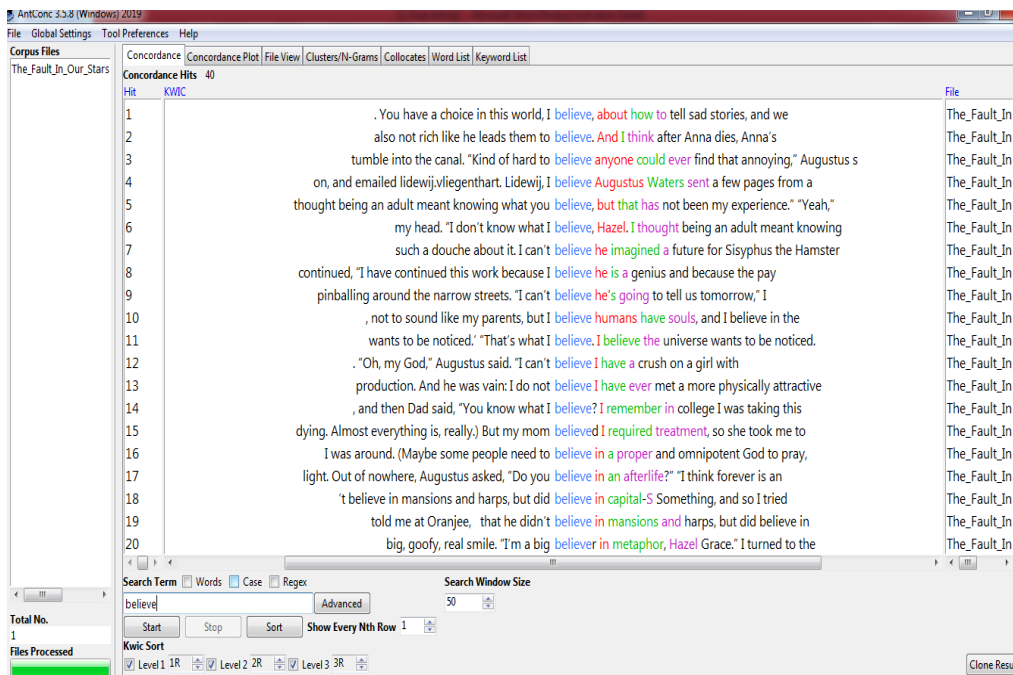


Figure 4. Concordance of the word “believe” is prominent in the picture below

3.6 Laugh: A Medicine Against Depressions

Laughing is characteristic of happiness, joy and contentment. With the abundant use of this word in a novel with this particular theme shows the optimistic approach of the writer.

“I laughed pretty hard, hard enough that I felt where the chest tube had been. You laugh because “it’s true,” he said. I laughed again”. “They will robot-laugh at our courageous folly,” he said. (Chapter 08, page 03).

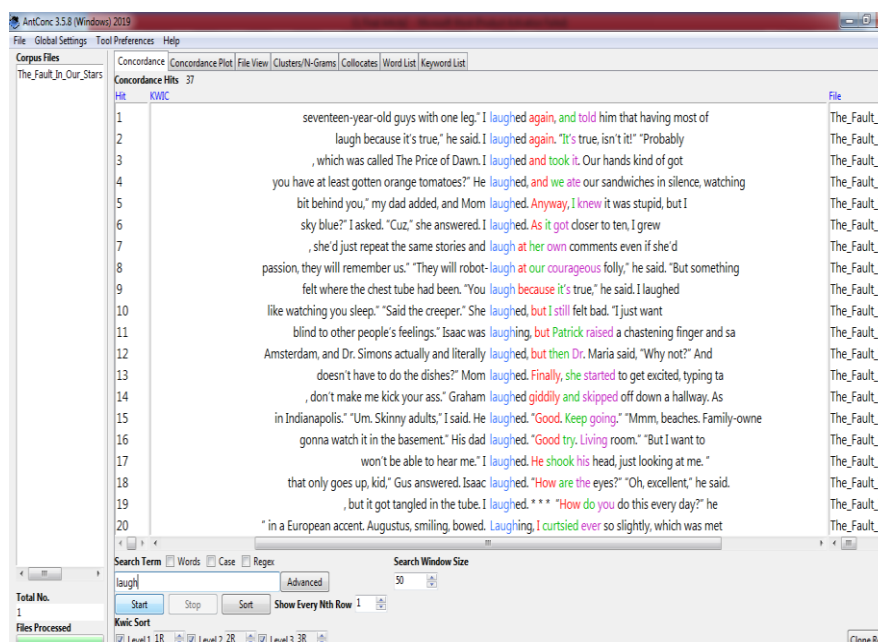


Figure 5. Concordance of the word “laugh” is prominent in the picture below

3.7 Pain: A Sign of Hope and Relief

Although the word itself shows grief and torture but John Greene has depicted the pain equivalent to relief. Bearing the pain is the strength of the patient by which strength increases.

“Without pain, we couldn’t know joy.”

“Pain demands to be felt” (Chapter 04, page 06).

“That’s the thing about pain,” “Augustus said, and then glanced back at me”. “It demands to be felt.”(Chapter 04, page 09).

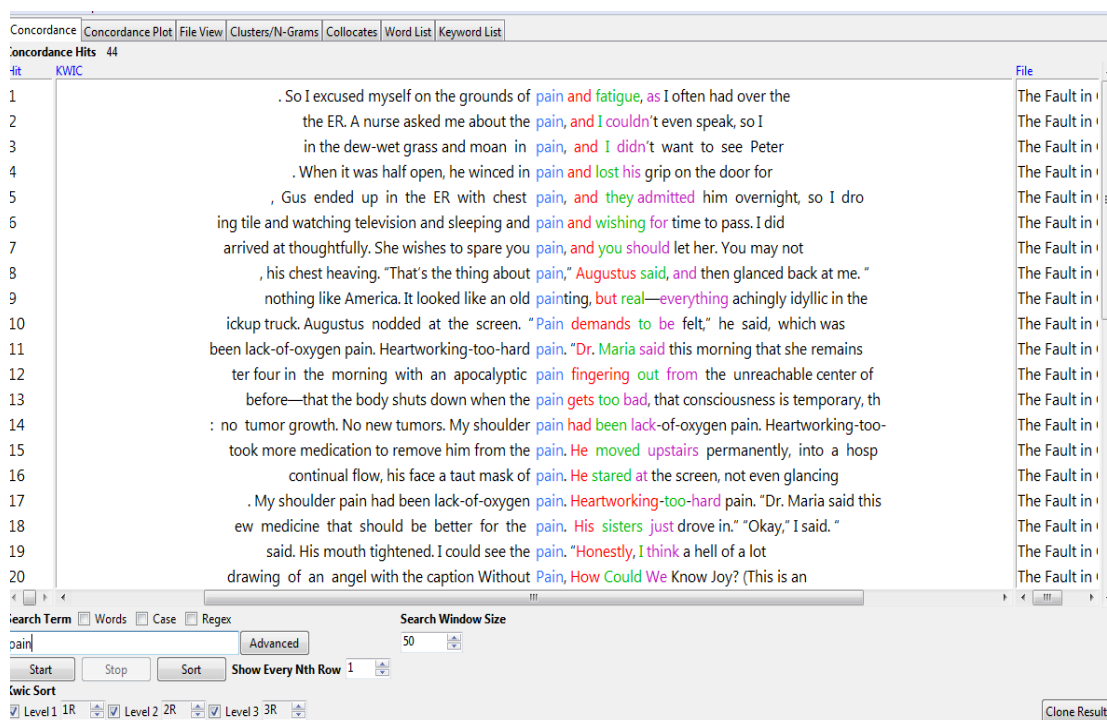


Figure 6. Concordance of the word “pain” is prominent in the picture below

3.8 Stay: A Token of Harmony.

Staying is an action that can be induced with the instant of harmony and satisfaction. In the several places the reader observes the frequent use of the word. For instance,

“If I could just stay alive for a week, I’d know the unwritten secrets of Anna’s mom and the Dutch Tulip Guy”. (Chapter 24, page 2).

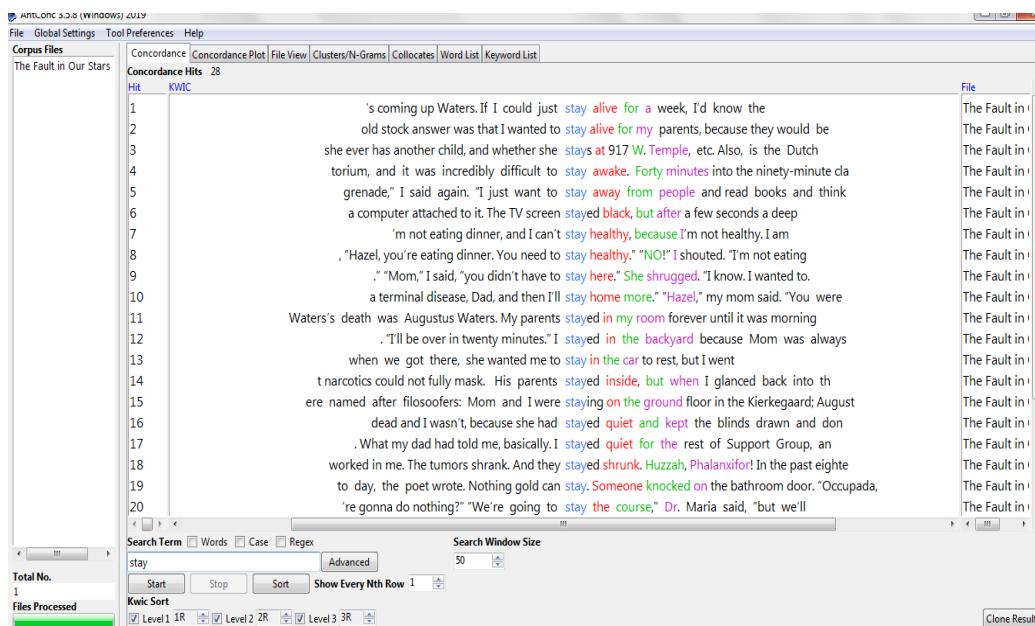


Figure 7. Concordance of the word “stay” is prominent in the picture below

3.9 Beautiful: A Signification of Appreciation

The person who is having a positive bent of mind and hopes only that can observe beauty around him. The pessimist will reject even the evident beautiful things around him. The selection of this word by the writer is depicting that life can be led by observing beauty and ignoring the ugliness of world around.

“God, that is beautiful,” “I said mostly to myself”. (Chapter 10, page 07).

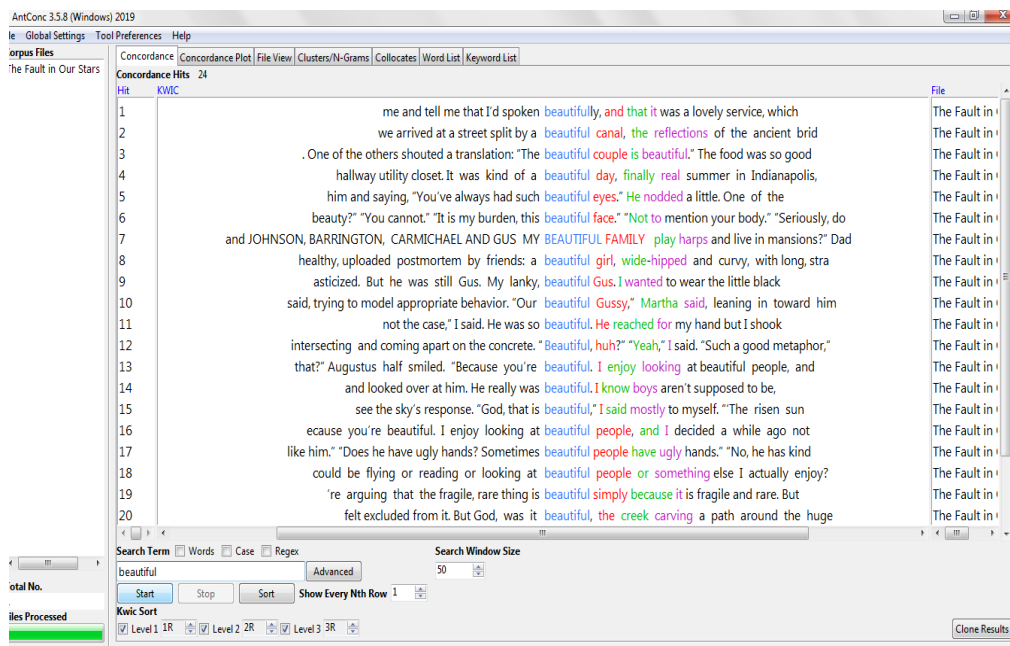


Figure 8. Concordance of the word “beautiful” is prominent in the picture below

3.10 Thank: A Sign of Humanness.

One who is having positivity and is contented upon the things he is blessed with only that person will show gratitude. The person living in the darkness of disappointment cannot be grateful to God and humans. Frequent use of this word by writer indicates that there is positivity in protagonist's thinking.

“I thank God for you every day, kid.” (Chapter 19, page 3).

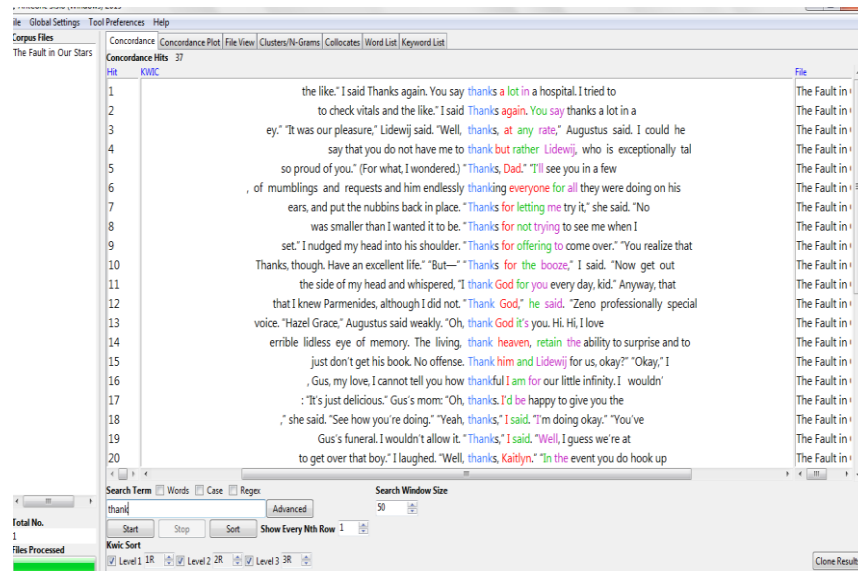


Figure 9. Concordance of the word “thanks” is prominent in the picture below

3.11 Hope: A Word of Achievement and Future

Hope is expectation that even currently there are miserable circumstances and life is going through difficult times but after sometime everything will get resolve.

“I’m hopeful I’ll get to attend as a ghost”, (Chapter 20, page 3).

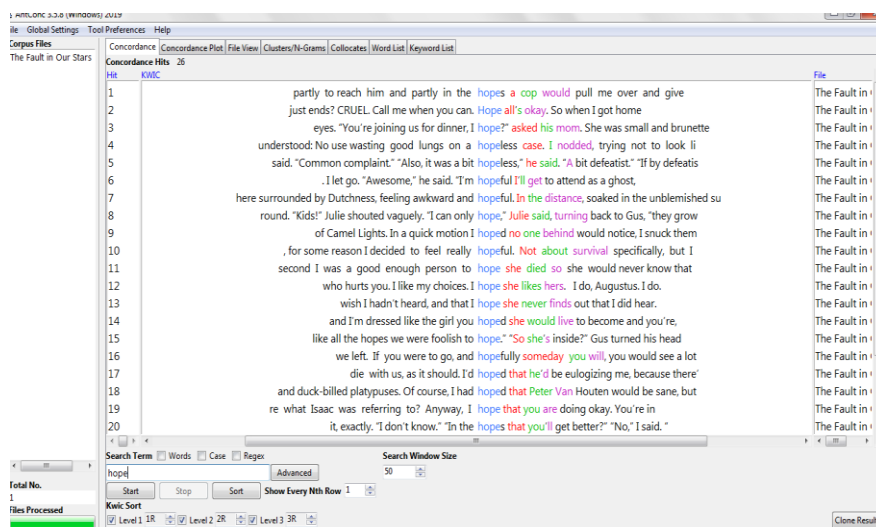


Figure 10. Concordance of the word “hope” is prominent in the picture below

3.12 Strong: A Synergy for Continuation of Life

To be strong means to have ability to bear all hardships vigorously, even when anyone is having power to think positive even in miserable physical state. Author uses this word for the main characters of the novel who are suffering but at the same time fighting in order to enjoy remaining moments of their lives.

“It was Lida the Strong.” (Chapter 09, page 02).

“They’re so strong! We admire them so!” (Chapter 11, page 08).

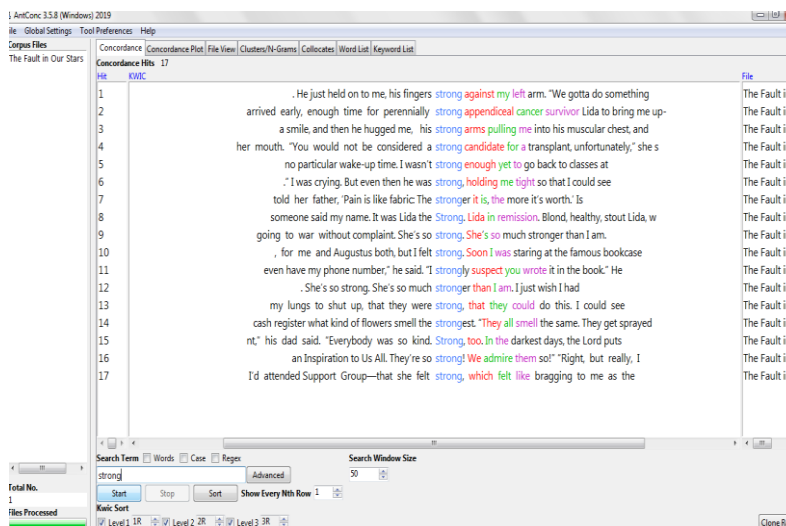


Figure 11. Concordance of the word “strong” is prominent in the picture below

3.13 Excite: A Token of Human Energy.

Pessimism is devoid of excitement and happiness. The characters of the novel built up an environment of exiting their own self within their misery. Excitement is created as a result of self-motivation which is the eminent theme of writer’s style.

“When surprised and excited and innocent Gus emerged from Grand Gesture Metaphorically Inclined Augustus,” (Chapter 10, page 7).

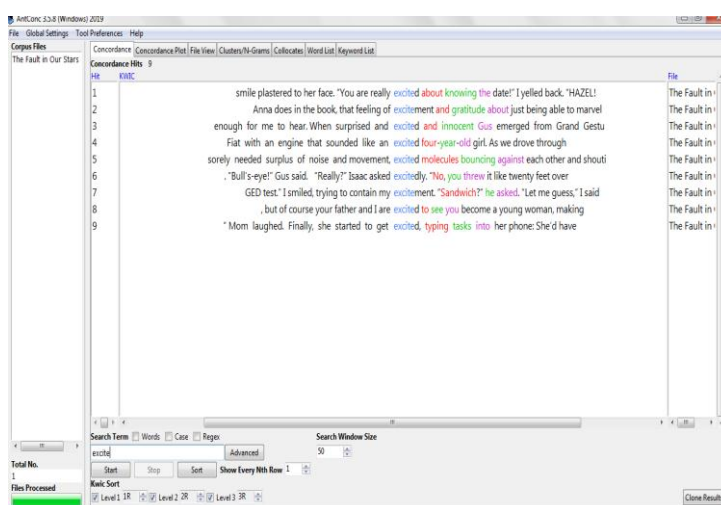


Figure 12. Concordance of the word “excite” is prominent in the picture below

3.14 Luck: A Word of Human Existence

Optimists believe in the goodness of the luck and consider that they are fortunate to have the available blessing of the God. The characters of the novel are persistent about the good luck in the comparison with the misfortune.

“I didn’t think much about my luck anymore one way or the other”

“He was lucky to enrolled in the trial, they told me.” (Chapter 14, page 3).

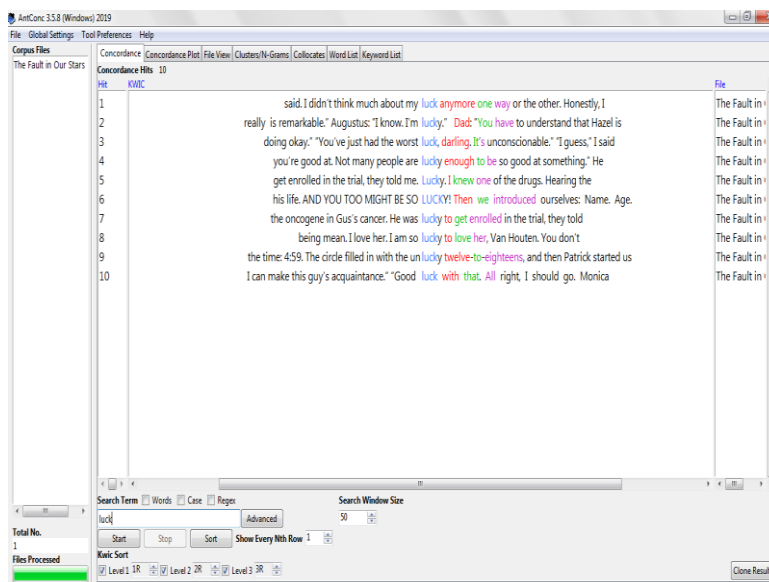


Figure 13. Concordance of the word “luck” is prominent in the picture below

3.15 Infinite: A Sign of Continuity

Infinity is the opposite to finiteness and limitations. Being immortal and infinite gives the impression of wonderfulness and everlasting contentment.

“New wars started even before the old ones were won. I hadn’t read a real series like that since I was a kid, and it was exciting to live again in an infinite fiction”. (Chapter 03, page 05).

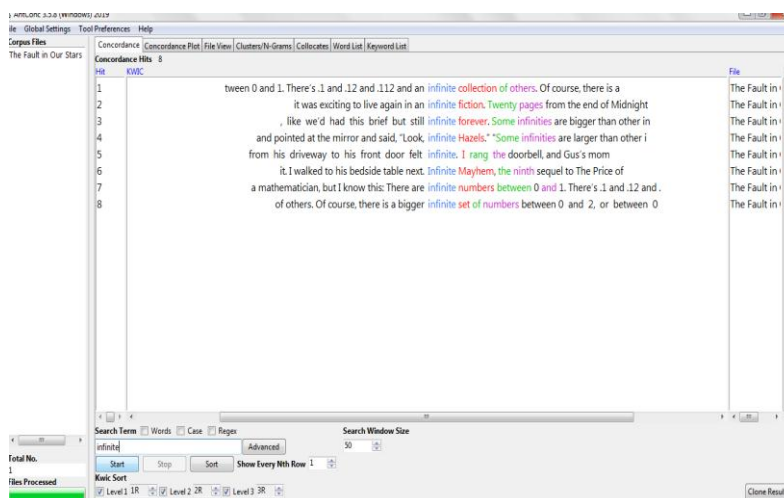


Figure 14. Concordance of the word “infinite” is prominent in the picture below

3.16 Heroic: A Sign of Bravery

Heroic is to have some specific chivalric characteristics. It means that you are brave, courageous and daring. All these traits are needed in order to face all the difficulties and barriers of life fearlessly.

“Van Houten. It is triumphant. It is heroic. Isn’t that the real heroism? Like the doctors say: First, do no harm. The real heroes anyway aren’t the people doing things; the real heroes are the people NOTICING things, paying attention”. (Chapter 25, page 07).

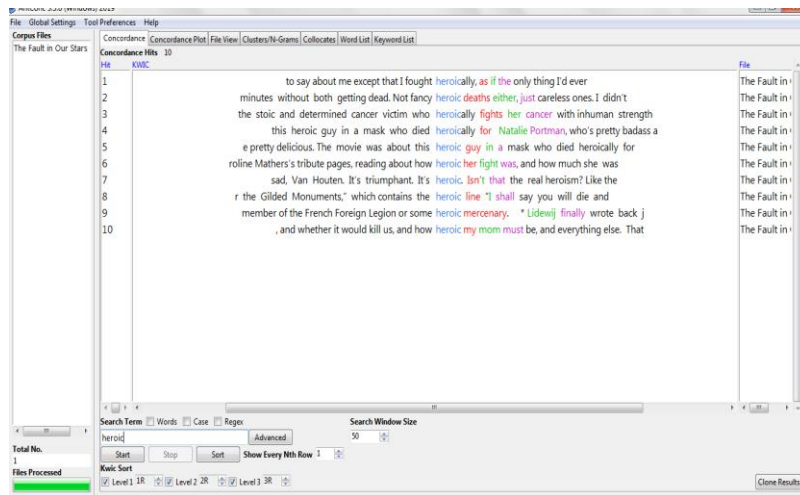


Figure 15. Concordance of the word “heroic” is prominent in the picture below

3.16.1 Trust: A Belief of Oneness

Trust means having strong belief on something or someone. Trust is faith and freedom from doubts and uncertainties. Here it depicts that the main characters despite of all miseries were having trust that things would not get worse and the life they are having they have to spend each moment of it lively instead of spending the remaining moments in disappointment.

“I walked Isaac to a seat in the Circle of Trust then slowly worked my way around the Literal Heart”. (Chapter 24, page 1).

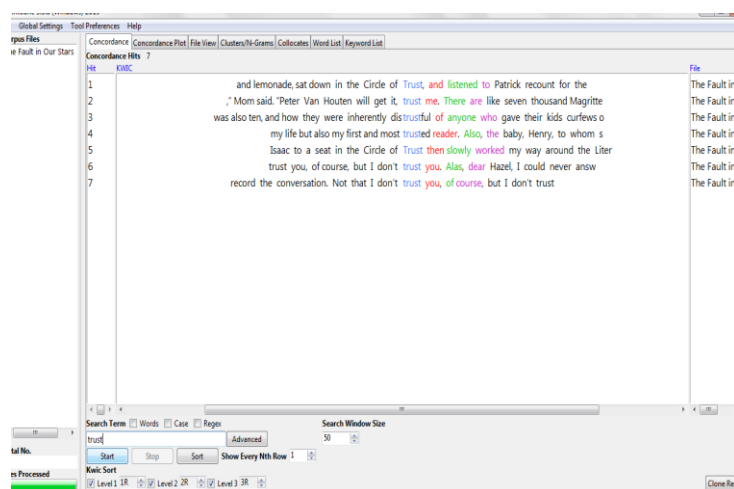


Figure 16. Concordance of the word “trust” is prominent in the picture below

3.17 Frequency Table

Following table shows the concordance of the selected 16 content words showing optimism in the novel.

Table 1. Collective frequencies of words used in the novel

Sr.	Words	Frequency
1	Okay	139
2	Love	103
3	Life	77
4	Believe	40
5	Laugh	37
6	Pain	44
7	Stay	28
8	Beautiful	24
9	Thank	37
10	Hope	26
11	Strong/Strength	17
12	Excite	9
13	Luck	10
14	Infinite	8
15	Heroic	08
16	Trust	07

4. Conclusion

The data and its interpretations have provided a strong evidence in support of the claim that Green's words selection promotes optimism in the novel. It is also observed that there are certain evidences to prove the hypothesis are embedded in the story that hopelessness and weakness should not be associative even if deadly disease like cancer is surpassing. Cancer patients have refuted accepting sympathy and the ill fate because of their poor health conditions. These are all the positive effects of optimism even for the person who is at death bed. The characters and the words of the novel depict hope and positivity. Patients seeking the help of support groups and soothing them with the optimistic approach in their limited life are encompassing rays of satisfaction to the readers. The people of the surrounding including the closest friends and family can greatly influence them to remain positive and look forward to extend their days or at least feel cured. It can be concluded by writer's usage of certain optimistic words that the effect of pain and low-spiritedness can be reduced by light-heartedness and happiness as in the end of the story the death of the hero makes no difference to the hope of the heroine.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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