

Now vs. 現在

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Corpus used: English – Chinese Parallel Concordancer (E-C Concord)
E-C Concord Website: <http://corpus.eduhk.hk/paraconc/>

Do you think ‘now’ in English and ‘現在’ in Chinese are used in the same way? Please complete the following tasks and find out the answer.

Task 1a:

Look at the following parallel concordance lines:

(1) T: “現在 該 到 花園 裡去 啦！”

now should go to garden into !

O: "And now for the garden!"

(2) T: “快點，現在 就 去！”

quick now immediately go

O: "Quick, now!"

(3) T: 把 它的 頭 抬 高 -- 現在 拿 白蘭地 來 --

make his head raise high now fetch brandy come

O: Hold up his head – Brandy now –

Question: Why are the English versions of the above sentences so much shorter than the Chinese ones? Are there any words omitted from the English sentences? What are they?

Task 1b:

Look at the following parallel concorance lines:

(4) O: 我 現在 不 吃 只是 我 不 想 吃 它 罷 了 。

I **now** not eat only I not want eat 3sg

T: But I didn't choose to just yet.

(5) O: 我 現在 是 “組長” 了，更 主要 的 是

I **now** be group leader PFV even mainly be

T: Because I was "group leader" and, even more, ...

(6) O: 我 想 他 不 是 隨口 這 樣 說 的，可 能 是 有 意 識 地
I think 3sg not be casually in this way speak may be intentionally

要 讓 我 知 道 我 現 在 不 同 於 過 去 的 身 份。
want let I know I **now** not same past GEN status

T: I suspected that he said this to let me know my changed status.

(7) O: 那 麼，我 現 在 生 活 於 其 間 的 這 個 新 的 生 存
then I **now** live in between this new living

環 境 是 怎 樣 的 呢？
surroundings be what Q

T: So what about my life in these new surroundings?

(8) T: 我 以 前 記 得 的 事 情，現 在 記 不 得 了
I before remember things **now** remember not

O: I can't remember things as I used to ...

(9) O: 現 在 舉 幾 個 例 罷 。

now cite a few example

T: To cite a few examples.

Question: What is missing from the English versions of the above sentences? Why?

Task 1c:

Look at the following parallel concorance lines:

(10) T: “好啦，我的 計劃 現在 已經 完成 了 一半！”
OK I **plan now** already finish one half

O: "Come, there's half my **plan** done **now**!"

(11) T: 我--我現在 簡直 弄 不 清楚，先生--
I I **now** almost make not clear sir

O: "I – I hardly know, Sir, just **at present** – ... "

(12) O: 可是我現在很 恢復 了 些 力氣 了。
but I **now** very recover some strength

T: But I feel much better **now**.

Question: What do you notice about the relative positions of **now** and *xian4zai4*? What conclusions can you draw?

Quiz

Please choose the more appropriate English translation of the following Chinese sentences:

O: 我現在拉長得像世界上最大的望遠鏡那樣！

I'm now opening out like the largest telescope that ever was!

Now I'm opening out like the largest telescope that ever was!

O: 事情到了這個地步，我現在已無計可施了。

Now I can do no more, whatever happens.

I now can do no more, whatever happens.

