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 concorance 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 身分。
     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—半！”
     OK       I       plan **now**       already       finish       one half

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

(11) T: 我--我現在简直弄不清楚，先生--
     I       I       now       almost       make       not       clear       sir

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

(12) O: 但是我现在很恢復了些力气了。
     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?

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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.