Two ways to express one idea

Which part of a meaning survives when the wording changes?

Compare paraphrases by checking which details they preserve.

Investigate | 10-20 minutes, or one small comparison | Scrap paper and a pencil or pen, The supplied original model; no account, purchase or online search needed

Start here Write the fictional instruction: After the bell, place the blue card inside the tray.

Version	When	What	Where
Original	after bell	blue card	inside tray
Paraphrase A	after bell	blue card	inside tray
Paraphrase B	before bell	a card	near tray

A preserves the needed details. B changes the task.

Same idea, different words-or a changed task

1 Break up the meaning

Name the action, the blue card, the inside of the tray and the timing after the bell. These are the details to track.

2 Compare a paraphrase

Put the blue card in the tray once the bell has sounded keeps those details, despite changing several words.

3 Spot a changed instruction

Put a card near the tray before the bell changes colour information, destination and timing. It is not equivalent for this task.

4 Choose an audience

Write a clear version for an invented display sign or a longer explanation. Keep the required meaning, while noting that real translation also depends on context.

Original example a card and a tray

The bell, card and instruction are fictional. No real translation or delivery task is being assessed.

• Original: after the bell; blue card; inside the tray.

• Paraphrase A preserves those three details using once the bell has sounded and in the tray.

• Paraphrase B says before, drops blue and changes inside to near, so it changes the required task.

What this example can show Near-equivalent wording can still differ in tone or context. Comparing English paraphrases does not qualify someone to translate another language.

A different way

Use three labelled cards for when, what and where, point to matching details, or dictate a paraphrase. No other language knowledge is needed.

If you want to go further

Make the instruction shorter for a small sign. Ask whether a reader can still recover the timing, blue card and inside-tray destination.

Something to notice

Did I preserve the needed meaning or only reuse some of the same words?

Read or explore more

Horizon topic Translation Meaning

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/translation-meaning/

Horizon topic Writing Purposes

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/writing-purposes/

Horizon topic Metaphor Comparison

https://launchhorizonhq.com/learn/metaphor-comparison/

The Open University, OpenLearn Semantic vs communicative translation, part 1

https://www.open.edu/openlearn/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=66419&section=4.1

Monash University Purpose and audience

https://www.monash.edu/student-academic-success/advance-your-graduate-studies/write-for-the-general-public/purpose-and-audience