

# A Study on Metaphor Translation Strategies in *Zhuangzi* from the Perspective of Embodied Cognition

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**Abstract**—Embodied cognition theory is a prominent topic in contemporary cognitive science research, with metaphor reflecting a crucial characteristic of human cognition. Metaphors lay a solid groundwork for embodied cognition and cultural substrates. *Zhuangzi* extensively employs metaphors, and embodied cognition theory can provide a novel perspective and substantial insights for the study of metaphor translation strategies. This research analyzes the translation strategies adopted in Feng Youlan's English rendition of *Zhuangzi* by examining the projection of embodied cognitive experiences from the source language into the target language, forming a shared substratum. The study reveals that the translator employs strategies such as literal translation, transposition, and free translation to taper off discrepancies in embodied cognition during metaphor translation, thereby constructing a practical way for Feng Youlan's translation of *Zhuangzi*. Through the distinctive communicative function of language, the translation conveys universally accessible mental experiences to the target audience, enhancing the acceptability of the translated text.

**Keywords**—embodied cognition, conceptual metaphor, *Zhuangzi*, translation strategies

## I. INTRODUCTION

Chinese culture boasts a long and illustrious history, providing rich nourishment for the everlasting vitality and robust development of the Chinese nation while leaving behind a wealth of outstanding cultural classics. *The Zhuangzi* stands as a timeless testament to the Taoist tradition within this cultural heritage. Zhuangzi, a great thinker, philosopher, and literary figure of China's pre-Qin (Warring States) period, was one of the principal founders of Taoist philosophy. He established the Zhuang School, a significant philosophical tradition within Chinese thought. *The Zhuangzi*, authored by Zhuangzi and his successors, is primarily composed of fables that reflect Zhuangzi's philosophy, art, aesthetics, worldview, and political perspectives[1]. *The Zhuangzi* is characterized by its magnificent language and imagery, embodying boundless imagination. Zhuangzi advocated for the equality of all things, urging people to abandon preconceived notions and attachments to achieve a state where "all things are one, and life and death are the same." It is also a indicative of the pursuit of absolute spiritual freedom, setting free from the pursuit of fame, fortune, and worldly desires, and get a leg-up for chasing freedom without gain, merit, or fame. Early Chinese studies of *the Zhuangzi* feature prominently on textual collation, annotation, philosophical interpretation, and philological research. Subsequently, the field gradually diversified and matured. Academic perspectives on *the Zhuangzi* expanded beyond traditional textual comparison, annotation, and translation to encompass philosophical speculation, literary criticism, aesthetic theory exploration, and linguistic analysis.

Overseas Sinology studies of *the Zhuangzi* have also transcended early translations and introductions, delving into interdisciplinary fields such as philosophical systems, literary arts, psychological analysis, linguistic philosophy, comparative religion, and mythological research [2]. In 1931, Feng Youlan's rendition of *Zhuangzi* was published by Commercial Press, and it was republished by Foreign Languages Press in Beijing in 1989. A distinctive feature of this translation consists in its annotations by Guo Xiang of the Jin Dynasty, coupled with comments on Guo Xiang's philosophical perspectives in the appendix [3]. *The Zhuangzi* abounds with spirits of nature—mountains, rivers, plants, and trees—and is rich in fables and aphorisms that call forth reflection. The metaphor is another defining characteristic. The fables and metaphorical techniques in *Zhuangzi* directly convey philosophical ideas while it is well-represented in its distinctive stylistic features, as illustrated by reflecting the text's universal literary value. The emergence of conceptual metaphor theory has put traditional language-bound research trends in this field on the back burner, re-examining the formation mechanisms and operational principles of metaphor [4]. Conceptual metaphors are universally employed in human thought and linguistic expression. Our bodily perceptions and cognitive patterns are symptomatic of cross-cultural universality, endowing conceptual metaphors with numerous shared, recognizable elements. This characteristic has made translators central to interpret source texts and construct target translations [5].

Many of scholars in China have explored metaphors translation strategies in *the Zhuangzi*. Yanan *et al.* [6] systematically examined the seven metaphor translation methods proposed by Newmark, paying more attention to cross-cultural mediation strategies from source languages to target languages. Through comparative analysis of the applicability of different translation approaches, she proposed optimized metaphor translation strategies based on cultural difference adaptation, providing methodological guidance for the cross-linguistic transmission of culturally loaded metaphors [6]. Zhai Linke employed a combined descriptive and analytical approach to conduct an in-depth examination of conceptual metaphors in the *Zhuangzi* text. Starting with three hierarchical units—vocabulary, phrases, and sentences—systematically mapping the cognitive representations of conceptual metaphors in *Zhuangzi*. By analyzing the mapping relationships between source and target domains, the study reveals the intrinsic connection between the cognitive similarity of metaphorical structures and the expression of philosophical ideas. Chen Haiqing and Gao Sinan conducted a discourse-level empirical study of conceptual metaphors in the *Zhuangzi* chapters "Nurturing

Life” and “External Things” from a cognitive linguistics perspective. Using conceptual metaphor theory and association theory as analytical frameworks, they systematically mapped source domains to target domains to construct an intrinsic network of deep-level semantic connections within the discourse, thereby uncover new insights into the cognitive interpretation of classical texts. While the above studies hold the key to describe the classification and discourse analysis of conceptual metaphors, research integrating conceptual metaphor theory with embodied cognition shoots to prominence, particularly concerning the translation process of cultural imagery within metaphors.

This study will take Feng Youlan’s translations as a reference point, integrating embodied cognition theory and cognitive translation studies to explore the English translation strategies for conceptual metaphors in *Zhuangzi* translations. It will examine the role of embodied cognitive reality experiences and shared bodily experience within metaphors during translation. Theoretically, it fully explores the translator’s subjectivity manifested in the translation process and how to enhance this subjective cognitive activity. In the same breath, it investigates the translation methods employed by translators based on shared bodily experiences in parallel with readers’ cognitive experiences. This aims to provide theoretical guidance for the English translation practice of *Zhuangzi* and contribute to classical philosophical texts.

## II. EMBODIED COGNITION AND EMBODIED METAPHOR

### A. Theoretical Analysis of Embodiment

The concepts of embodied cognition, embodied learning are interrelated and frequently discussed in academic discourse. Freiler notes that contemporary research increasingly emphasizes the essential role of bodily experience in knowledge construction—a process not only achieved through abstract thought but rooted in dynamic physiological experiences. Embodiment is fundamentally a bodily experience [7]. Humans give birth to the concepts and categories indispensable for thought through the interplay of sensory perception and action, signifying that conceptual systems are always grounded in the body. From an ontological perspective, embodied cognition theory goes beyond the boundaries of traditional epistemology, establishing bodily experience as the cornerstone for humans constructing the world meaning. This mode of perception, banked on individual existence, not only shapes uniquely human forms of being but also constitutes the ontological foundation of cognitive activity. In the evolution of phenomenology, Husserl carves out the path of transcendental phenomenology through his theory of intentionality, while Merleau-Ponty realizes the shift towards embodied cognition, shifting the focus from phenomenological inquiry to the “embodied subjectivity” concept. This groundbreaking insight completely navigates the traditional mind-body dualism: the human condition is neither a Cartesian thinking entity nor a mechanistic material shell, but rather a subjectively generated existence through embodied practices. Within this theoretical framework, the body is redefined as a “perceptual subject,” whose unique sensorimotor system craft distinct human cognitive

schemes [8]. Merleau-Ponty [9] profoundly observes in *Phenomenology of Perception*: “The bodily phenomena researchers’ analyses are essentially their own modes of being. When psychologists study the body as an object, they are simultaneously experiencing and embodying this state of existence” [9]. This embodied cognitive mechanism is realized through the dynamic operation of bodily schemes—distinct biological structures determine differentiated behaviour potentials, while diverse bodily practices reciprocally shape unique embodied experiences [10].

If traditional cognitive science represents the first generation, embodied cognition signifies the second revolution in cognitive science. Lakoff and Johnson term traditional cognitive science “the cognitive science of the disembodied mind,” arguing its research paradigm fails to genuinely explain the nature of the mind due to its separation from the body. In contrast, embodied cognition theory emphasizes that individual experience arises from the interaction between the body and the world. All cognitive activities are grounded in sensorimotor capacities, which are deeply rooted in bodily, psychological, and cultural contexts. Lakoff further contends that cognition is grounded in an individual’s bodily structure and the social experiences derives from human-environment interaction. He posits that cognitive development comprises three interrelated levels: the experiential mind, unconscious cognition, and metaphorical thinking, with the experiential mind occupying a central position. It is through embodied bodily experience that humans develop understanding of others, events, and the world at large. As a tool for expressing cognition, language itself possesses embodied structures—whether in everyday speech or abstract grammatical systems, both originate from the interactive experience between the body and the world [11]. Embodied cognition gains new perspectives and significant insights into research on metaphorical translation strategies.

### B. The Embodied Cognitive Basis and Cultural Foundation of Metaphor

In 1980, Lakoff and Johnson [12] proposed in *Metaphors We Live By* that metaphor is not merely a linguistic device but a fundamental way humans cognitively construct the world [12]. They argued that metaphorical construction is rooted in bodily experience while simultaneously shaped by specific cultural patterns. Human bodily perception and cultural accumulation jointly make a push into metaphor formation. During the cross-domain projection of metaphors, people often rely on familiar concrete entities (such as body parts) as cognitive starting points to interpret relatively abstract concepts. This characteristic vividly reflects the embodied cognitive nature of metaphors. Simultaneously, metaphor is defined as a cognitive mechanism: it systematically maps concepts from one cognitive domain to another, often through automatic, unconscious processes. In many instances, expressions originally grounded in metaphor have solidified into the basic meanings of words, making metaphors indispensable for understanding or expressing certain abstract concepts. Conceptual metaphor theory delves deeply into the essence, origins, formation processes, and cognitive operational mechanisms of metaphor. Through extensive empirical research, Lakoff and Johnson discovered

that in cognitive processes, humans often rely on concrete, intuitive, and simple primal domain concepts (such as temperature, space, bodily actions, etc.) to understand and construct abstract, intangible, and complex target domain concepts (such as emotional experiences, social interactions, moral concepts, etc.). It is through this cross-domain mapping that humans bring about abstract thinking and the cognition and expression of complex concepts [13].

The cultural groundwork of metaphor lies in its origin within shared embodied experiences, despite being rooted in individual mental activity. These embodied experiences do not exist in isolation; they are shaped by specific cultural beliefs and values, inherently embodying complex sociocultural structures. Though metaphorical thinking possesses imaginative qualities, this imagination is not unfettered—metaphorical cognition remains deeply rooted in specific cultural background. This cultural mark inherently endows it with distinct cultural characteristics. Cultural patterns exert a dual shaping influence: for one thing, they model the impact of people's value systems; for another, they make a mark on behavioral patterns and profoundly affect how individuals express their experiences of the world and themselves. Conversely, conceptual metaphors progress to aggregate and reconstruct cultural patterns—patterns that are both cultural products and crystallizations of cognition. Precisely for this reason, metaphorical thinking has always accompanied the construction of human worldviews. From a genesis perspective, metaphors are rooted in the daily practices of linguistic communities, representing the sedimentation and expression of culture within language. They function like “cultural codes” within collective memory, deeply integrated into the mindset of specific language users. Essentially, metaphor embodies the essence of a nation's culture, vividly reflecting its rich connotations. As a linguistic phenomenon, metaphor maintains an inextricably linked relationship with culture [14].

### *C. The Embodied Cognitive Perspective on Metaphor Translation*

Within the field of metaphor translation studies, differentiated viewpoints persist among scholars. Traditional translation theories centered on rhetoric see metaphor translation as a process of converting cross-linguistic rhetorical forms. Within this theoretical framework, the translator's task is simplified as follows: first, analyze the metaphorical rhetoric in the source text; then, identify a “equivalent” rhetorical expression in the target language or restore the source text's connotations as faithfully as possible to achieve interlingual conversion. The renowned British translation theorist Newmark did the heavy lifting to this field, systematically proposing seven metaphor translation strategies from a cultural perspective. Notably, Chinese scholars have also made significant strides in this field in recent years. They have explored metaphor translation theory and practical strategies from multiple dimensions, producing a series of valuable research outcomes. Yu [15] focuses on the essential influence of metaphor cognition on translation activities. He argues that metaphor comprehension and conversion are critical components in cross-cultural translation, translators beat the heart of grasping the cognitive mechanisms of metaphors. Only by shooting for solid

metaphor cognition research can translators accurately drive home the cultural connotations of foreign texts, achieve high-quality textual conversion, and ultimately fulfill the objectives of effective cultural communication and exchange. This perspective provides crucial theoretical guidance for metaphor handling in translation practice [15].

The rise of cognitive science has driven scholars to delve deeper into metaphor research, elevating our understanding of metaphors to the cognitive level. Conceptual metaphor theory, as a crucial theoretical framework in cognitive linguistics, reveals that metaphor is fundamentally a cognitive phenomenon. From this perspective, metaphor translation is understood as a cognition-driven cross-linguistic cognitive activity. This translation process not only entails the conversion of linguistic surface forms but, more crucially, embodies a complex cognitive mechanism encompassing conceptual restructuring and semantic mapping. It positions the active cognitive activity of the translator as the translating subject—a process where they achieve their effect through subjective initiative to comprehend the source text, finalize metaphorical translation strategies, render the target text, and convey cultural information [16]. As a conceptual system, metaphor continually employs known embodied experiences to comprehend unknown abstract entities, using concrete familiar objects to understand inexperienced phenomena. It connects seemingly unrelated elements, facilitating projection and semantic transformation between two conceptual or cognitive domains [17]. However, metaphorical translation extends beyond simple correspondence between source and target domains. It must fully free up for shared cognitive experiences across distinct cultural contexts, as metaphors function as mapping activities at the level of human cognition, involving perception and sensibility. How to construct an embodied cognitive process for metaphorical translation and establish a reasonable cognitive framework? From the perspective of embodied linguistics, incorporating embodied cognition theory facilitates expanded research into the metaphorical mechanisms within Taoist classics like *the Zhuangzi*.

### III. PATHWAYS FOR TRANSLATING EMBODIED METAPHORS IN *ZHUANGZI*

From the perspective of embodied linguistics, metaphor translation open up new vistas for embodied cognition. As a direct means of transforming perception into conceptual forms during cognition, metaphors drive the philosophical ideas and emotional willpower home conveyed in *Zhuangzi* texts through concrete, authentic embodied experiences. Translation is a metaphorical activity that embodies the fundamental metaphor functions. Therefore, conveying the abundant metaphorical representations in *Zhuangzi*'s language naturally undergoes a metaphorical process [18].

*Zhuangzi*'s conception is novel and extraordinary, its prose flowing freely and boundlessly, undulating with waves and displaying myriad forms. Thus, when translating this philosophically rich classic, metaphor serves not only as a crucial medium for conveying ideas but also as a core element for offering further proof of its literary value. Translators shoulder a big role in grasping the original's intellectual depth and artistic distinctiveness when deal with the texts, striving

to faithfully evince the author's creative intent while enabling target-language readers to experience an aesthetic resonance comparable to that of the original language readers. Such translation practice constitutes both a profound interpretation of the original text and assume an instrumental role in fostering deep intercultural dialogue [9]. The *Zhuangzi* is highly culturally loaded, vigorously employing imagery bound up with cultural connotations. This imagery is rooted in the Chinese Taoist cultural context while also carrying embodied experiential echo. Therefore, examining the metaphorical translation in Feng Youlan's *Zhuangzi* can begin with embodied experiences—shared bodily experiences across different cultural contexts. Banked on embodied cognition theory, this analysis explores the translation strategies employed by the translator, constructing a unique translation practice path for Feng Youlan's adaptation of *Zhuangzi*. By leveraging the unique communicative function of language to convey shared mental experiences among audiences, the acceptability of the translation is enhanced.

#### *A. Literal Translation Method—Equivalent Mapping Metaphor*

The metaphor generation is deeply rooted in humanity's practical experiences interacting with nature and social environments. Although English and Chinese dovetail with distinct linguistic systems carrying markedly different culture traditions, shared human physiology, perceptual systems, cognitive mechanisms, and similar life practices and social development endow these two cultures with profound commonalities at a deep level. This commonality manifests the tendency of people to develop similar cognitive patterns regarding the objective world and construct analogous conceptual structures. Consequently, English and Chinese share numerous conceptual metaphors derived from identical source domains and mapping methods, along with corresponding linguistic expressions. Therefore, when operating within different cultural contexts, if the cognitive approach to metaphor is identical, the conceptual systems are equivalent, and shared embodied cognitive experiences exist, a translation strategy that preserves the imagery—literal translation—can be employed. This strategy directly conveys the source language's cognitive approach to the target language, enabling target language readers to gain the same cognitive experience as source language readers. The imagery within both cultural contexts neither compensates nor diminishes, achieving cultural equilibrium.

Example 1, 《庄子·逍遥游》中, “曰: 藐姑射之山, 有神人居焉。肌肤若冰雪, 绰约若处子; 不食五谷, 吸风饮露。”

Translation: “He said, replied Chien Wu, far away on the mountain of Ku Yi, there lived a spiritual man. His flesh and skin were like ice and snow. His manner was elegant and graceful as that of a maiden. He did not eat any of the five grains, but involved the wind and drank the dew.”

Through Jian Wu relaying Jie Yu's “divine madman's words” to Lian Shu, Lian Shu elucidates the divine being's transcendence of natural forces and worldly achievements. Wang Ni describes the supreme sage's detachment from the mundane, roaming the four seas—from another angle, highlighting the insignificance of worldly fame and fortune.

The concluding lines serve as the crowning touch: when Yao encountered the divine man, he forgot the world entirely. Here, the “divine man” carries metaphorical significance: humanity reflects finite existence that has utterly forgotten the sacred, while the divine man embodies absolute sanctity and eternity. The “divine man” infuses himself with divinity, dissolving the meaning of the real world and expressing modern humanity's despairing lament over the order of life. These two passages articulate the highest aspiration and ultimate realm of Zhuangzi's philosophy of life, serving as both the origin and destination of his thought. Through the approach of “waiting for nothing” and “roaming the infinite,” they express that humans should fully grasp the natural laws of the universe, courageously explore the unknown, and call on absolute freedom—both spiritual and material. The “divine being” thus becomes our spiritual anchor and expression. Feng Youlan employs a literal translation to convey embodied cognitive cultural imagery. The original text describes a maiden whose skin is as white and translucent as ice and snow, whose demeanor is gentle and graceful like a virgin. This “divine being” drinks wind and dew, rides the clouds, and roams the four seas. Here, the maiden's skin is directly rendered as “ice and snow.” From an embodied cognition perspective, these metaphors are not utterly rhetorical embellishments or fantasies. By invoking humanity's fundamental sensorimotor systems, readers are transported to a philosophical realm of “absolute freedom.” This transforms the ineffable nature of the Tao into a “divine being schema” comprehensible to the body, then expands these personal bodily experiences into a transcendent “divine being body” through metaphor. This experience suggests that divine and supreme beings transcend the limitations of singular senses. This linguistic strategy enables readers to experience the essence of “carefree freedom” at the level of bodily simulation: a state of liberty rooted in yet transcending the senses. The divine-human imagery itself is also a natural and social form processed through the people's imagination in an unconscious artistic manner. For conceptual metaphors grounded in embodied cognition, a literal translation approach is doable. This not only perfectly preserves the cultural imagery of the original text but also scales down translation errors caused by the translator's subjective interpretation of ambiguities in the source text.

#### *B. Interpretive Translation Method—Metaphors with Different Levels of Correspondence*

Language carries the essence of human culture, reflecting the unique mindset of different ethnic groups. Due to differences in linguistic categories and structural features, particularly in vocabulary related to religion, marriage customs, life and death, complete equivalence is often unattainable, rendering metaphorical translation inherently untranslatable to some degree. When the cultural gap between source and target languages is too vast, preventing the original metaphorical imagery from generating corresponding associations in the target audience, translators must resort to free translation to convey the principal meaning of the original text. When zeroing in on differentiated cultural contexts, certain conceptual metaphors may carry strong national cultural characteristics. In such cases, translation must fully consider the target audience's

perspective, convey the target culture's features, and sometimes abandon the metaphorical image entirely to accurately transmit the original content and information. From an embodied cognition perspective, employing free translation allows translators to fully leverage their subjective initiative.

Example 2, 《庄子·养生主》中, 指穷于为薪, 火传也, 不知其尽也。

Translation: The fingers may not be able to supply all the fuel. But the fire is transmitted, and we know not when it will come to an end.

Zhuangzi concluded with admonitory statement, which not only echoed his perspective on life and death but also used the metaphor of “the fire continuing after the fuel is exhausted” to express the profound meaning of the entire text. Literally, it demonstrates that while the wax and oil used as fuel for a candle may eventually burn out, the flame itself endures and spreads, never ceasing. Its deeper meaning metaphorically describes how knowledge, skills, spirit, or culture are passed down through master-disciple relationships and generations, continuing endlessly and perpetually. It also symbolizes that while individual lives are finite, their value can transcend temporal and spatial limitations through transmission. Embodied cognition theory posits that human cognition and concept formation are rooted in the interaction between the body and the environment. The “burning out of the wick while the flame endures” precisely serve as a proxy for the mapping process from concrete physical experiences (burning, transmission) to abstract cultural concepts (transmission, continuity). The fire's continuity depends on environmental factors like wind and fuel, analogous to how cultural diffusion relies on social structures such as educational systems and family networks. This interplay between environment and embodied cognition give us a measure of the “extended mind” perspective of embodied cognition theory. To facilitate comprehension for target-language readers, Feng Youlan omitted the original imagery of “grease” in his translation. Since “grease” carries different connotations in Western culture than in the Chinese context, he instead rendered “薪” as “fuel”—a term sharing the same combustion function. This adaptation aligns more closely with the target-language cultural context's concept of “fire” while conveying the identical embodied cognitive experience. Constrained by dual linguistic and cultural frameworks, translators must not only fully comprehend and be alive to the target audience's cognitive patterns and cultural experiences but also ensure the translation is equally received by them. This guarantees that the conveyed information either transmits the source text's imagery or interprets an equivalent, identical imagery for the reader. Thus, when the mapping between the source domain and target domain differs, the original text's metaphor must be omitted in translation. Instead, the cognitive outcome is expressed through a paraphrased translation method in the target text.

### C. Conversion Method—Equivalent Mapping Metaphor

In Chinese and English linguistic contexts, perceptions and interpretations of the same imagery often differ. When certain imagery carries distinct cultural characteristics, retaining the original imagery may cause cognitive difficulties. Adjusting the imagery can effectively bridge cultural gaps, enabling the

original text's embodied experience to undergo cross-cultural reinterpretation in the translation [19]. Translation is not merely a conversion of meaning between source and target languages; it is a communication and fusion of cultural cognition across two cognitive domains. To enable target-language readers to achieve the same cognitive experience as the original readers, certain metaphorical images must be transformed to align with the cultural characteristics of the target context.

Example 3, 《庄子·人间世》中, 天下有道, 圣人成焉; 天下无道, 圣人生焉。

Translation: When good order prevails in the world, the sage seeks for accomplishment. When disorder prevails, he may preserve only his own life [20].

Zhuangzi pointed out that when the world is governed by the Way, the sage can accomplish great deeds; When the world abandon the Way, the sage can only preserve his life. In the chapter “Human World,” Zhuangzi's concept of the “Way” is metaphorically presented as a method and principle for preserving life in the face of treacherous social realities—namely, navigating turbulent times to ensure one's own safety. To avoid harm and remain unharmed, one must abandon the pursuit of fame and profit, allowing the mind to attain a state of emptiness and clarity. This leads to the objective goal of achieving greatness through non-action and utility through uselessness. This proposition reveals the dynamic adaptation of cognition to the environment, where the body serves as a sensor of circumstances. “Becoming” or “life” is not a subjective choice, but the body's direct response to environmental resistance. Cognition is an embodied strategy. Sages adjust their visible or hidden bodily postures and sensory engagement to align with the state of the world—whether it embodies the “Way” or “no Way”. This analysis transforms classical philosophy into an operational cognitive science framework, offering modern individuals an embodied philosophy of survival that adapts to changing circumstances. Since Western culture lacks the philosophical concept of “Tao”, the translator, considering contextual nuances, renders it as “good order” or “disorder”—accurately conveying the original meaning of upholding order amidst chaos. Translators should draw upon the target language's cultural norms and semantic associations to recreate the source text's conceptual meaning and content using culturally resonant imagery, achieving translation equivalence.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Embodied cognition emphasizes the dependence of cognition on the body. We will continue to delve into the definition of bodily experience, moving beyond solely physical manifestations to explore the inner cognitive world of individuals. This involves uncovering the relational meanings expressed through people's psychological activities, behaviors, and attitudes, thereby evoking emotional resonance. This paper analyzes the metaphorical translation strategies in Feng Youlan's English translation of *Zhuangzi* through the lens of embodied cognition theory. It explores new approaches for translating *Zhuangzi* into English, which will help expand the international influence of Chinese Taoist philosophy and culture, promote the dissemination of China's outstanding traditional culture, and foster continuous

innovation in metaphorical translation. The embodied cognition perspective provides a robust theoretical reference for metaphor translation research and opens up new practical pathways for the English translation of metaphors in *Zhuangzi*. This not only facilitates the dissemination of uniquely Chinese metaphorical imagery to the global community but also fosters higher-quality translations of Chinese classical works. By translating *Zhuangzi* into international public opinion arenas, it enables more people to comprehend China's philosophical wisdom, understand its classical discourse. Consequently, this enhances the quality and effectiveness of China's external communication while building a positive international culture image.

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest

#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The first author Chen Chao is responsible for the article writing, the collection of bibliographies, and the corresponding author Hongguo Xue is responsible for checking out the mistakes of the article and cross examine the mistakes of the whole passage. All authors had approved the final version.

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